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The Week

FIVE of the ablest Senators who place first the interests of wage earners, farmers and consumers generally, are Norris of Nebraska, Costigan of Colorado, Cutting of New Mexico, La Follette of Wisconsin and Wheeler of Montana. Three of them are nominally Republicans; two are nominally Democrats, but they are closer to one another than to the traditional leaders of their respective parties. Their action in calling a conference of progressive Governors, members of the House of Representatives and economists to formulate a sound legislative program for the next session of Congress has great significance. They state, correctly, that "in the midst of depression the nation is without effective political or economic leadership." In spite of "months of misery in the industrial centers and on the farms" there is "lack of any proposals for the solution of one of the greatest economic crises ever confronting the nation." The signers of the call "believe that there are certain economic and political problems affecting the welfare of every citizen which must be solved if this republic is to endure and realize for all that fullness and richness of life which was the hope that spurred our forefathers to found this government." The progressives in Congress have sponsored many excellent measures, but they have had no integrated program. They disclaim any intention, in calling the conference, of laying the basis for a new party. We agree that, whatever the future may hold, the first business is for these like-minded leaders to develop a sound program around which forces may rally without regard to partisan advantage.

WHEN President Hoover announced that he was seeking engineering advice on the Muscle Shoals Bill, in order to decide whether to veto or sign it, Senator Norris aptly told the story about the New England judge who, after hearing a case, stated that he would take it under advisement for three days, and then render judgment for the plaintiff. Everybody knows that the engineering aspects of this particular bill did not determine the President's attitude toward it; his effort to create the impression that this is an "engineering" and not a "political" question is just playing with words. Mr. Hoover has consistently opposed the entry of "government into business"; he favors, as a policy, leaving the private utilities in full possession of the power industry, without governmental competition. When we say that he is friendly to the "power trust," we do not imply that he is bribed by the industry or is doing a favor for a friend. We refer merely to the undeniable fact that in almost every respect he sees eye to eye with the utility magnates. The basic issue of public versus private operation of Muscle Shoals is an important political issue if there ever was one, since it is a question of public policy. In so far as it is an engineering problem it is one of broad economic and social engineering, rather than of technical details concerning electrical generation and distribution. We believe in the maximum attainable amount of public operation, as a check on the profits and practices of the private utilities. Because they fear such checks, the private utilities have for years used many stratagems to defeat public operation of Muscle Shoals. The latest stratagem is employed for them by the President's veto.

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ONE of the most disappointing things about the London Naval Conference was the fact that France and Italy did not sign the final agreement. Their abstention had a direct and serious consequence in the famous "escalator" clause by which England reserved the right to abandon the limitations set by the treaty if France or Italy should build so many ships that she considered her safety imperiled. If England were to build, of course Japan and the United States would do the same, and the principle of limitation would be nullified. This danger has now been happily averted for the next five years. As the result of long and patient negotiations in which the British played the leading role, France and Italy have come to an agreement which in effect makes them parties to the London treaty. The details have not been made public as we write, but they appear to be about the same as would have resulted if these two countries had signed in the first place. Italy, doubtless driven by the necessities of her extremely serious financial situation, has abandoned the cherished principle of complete equality with France. She accepts a total naval tonnage said to be about 77 percent as large as that of France; and in exchange for this, France reduces her present building program so that her superiority in 1936 will be only about 90,000 tons instead of 240,000. France gets a superiority in submarines of eighty to fifty. There are rumors in Paris that Italy's consent was obtained in exchange for a promise of a large loan, and whether this is true or not, it may be assumed that Mussolini has driven a hard bargain.

THE consent of both Japan and the United States must be obtained before the new agreement will go into effect. It is even suggested that an entire new five-power conference will be necessary, since the Franco-Italian understanding changes the categories and otherwise affects not only the London naval treaty but the Washington five-power pact. That serious obstacles will be opposed to ratification of the new agreement seems altogether unlikely, particularly in view of the way in which it clears the road for the coming general disarmament conference of 1932 under the auspices of the League of Nations. While it is easy to exaggerate the value of agreements for naval limitation, certainly this one is of great importance. It will be a powerful antidote to the pessimism which has been so prevalent in Europe in recent months. Not in many years has English diplomacy so well justified its role as mediator in Continental quarrels.

ANOTHER Caribbean country is in trouble, and plenty of it. Santo Domingo, which for a quarter of a century has been virtually a protectorate of the United States, with frequent interventions by our Marines, is suffering a reign of terror instigated by the dictator, Trujillo, in his own interest. As Drew Pearson has recently reported in The Baltimore Sun, in the past few months eleven persons have been "mysteriously" assassinated, most of them political opponents of Trujillo or hostile newspaper editors. Twenty-eight important Dominicans have been imprisoned or exiled. The press is subject to strict censorship, as are the correspondents of American news services. All the federal judges were removed from office a few weeks ago, two years before the expiration of their terms, because they refused to endorse Trujillo's acts. The country is almost bankrupt, partly because of the terrific hurricane last summer; the customs, which provide nearly half the revenues, are collected by the United States and three-quarters of the receipts go for service on the foreign loans. Trujillo is now seeking a new loan in New York, and several banking houses have offered him money on the customary highly profitable terms; but Secretary Stimson has thus far refused his consent, which is necessary under the terms of the present treaty between Santo Domingo and the United States. We hope he will continue to set his face against a loan which, under the circumstances, can hardly result in anything else than an open scandal. There are only two realistic policies for us in regard to Santo Domingo and every other Caribbean country: either we should get out entirely, and this is decidedly preferable, or we should exercise sufficient control to make impossible the continuance of ruthless dictators like Trujillo and the Cuban Machado.

WHEN Russia sells wheat on world markets it is dumping, but when the Federal Farm Board of the United States does the same, it is farm relief. At least that is what Alexander Legge seems to think. He was much disturbed by the resentment of European agricultural interests at the news that the Farm Board was about to sell 35,000,000 bushels of its accumulated surplus in European markets. The distinction between our action and Russia's, he says, is that we have a higher grade of wheat than that raised in the Danubian states, and are not offering it below the world price, while Russia is competing with Europe and underselling. Assuming that his statement is correct, this is a distinction without a difference. Both America and Russia undoubtedly try to get the highest prices they can. Both have to sell, if they do so, at the prices which will be paid. The effect on prices of 35,000,000 bushels of American wheat brought to market can hardly differ much from the effect of the same amount of Russian wheat. Though grades may differ, the prices for the several grades move sympathetically. If this were not true, and if we are selling a totally different quality from that which Russia has to offer, why all the hullabaloo about the effect of Russian dumping on American wheat farmers? Aside from this consideration, our action accords with every accepted definition of dumping. We are selling abroad at a lower price than that maintained at home. We are selling abroad at less than the average cost of production. If that is not dumping, what is?

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THE water company in Haverstraw, New York, has hurt the mayor's feelings by pointing out that the town contains more automobiles than bathtubs. Just why this should be an argument against lower rates for water we fail to see; if people don't appreciate the water enough to provide themselves with modern bathing facilities, or if they find its use an extravagance, the answer would seem to be that it ought to be made cheaper. As a matter of fact, however, Haverstraw need not feel particularly hurt by the revelation; the condition is general throughout the United States. And it is not a sign that people would not like bathtubs if they could have them. What it does mean is that standards of living have not advanced so far generally as surface indications would make it appear. Millions really cannot, on their incomes, have both motor cars and modern plumbing, and they value transportation more highly than they do the convenience of up-to-date sanitation. Housing exhibits one of the most pronounced failures of industry to provide modern standards within the reach of the lower income classes.

AGAIN evidence is presented that an industry which proceeds on the basis of full union recognition, with hours and pay set by collective agreement, can gain in efficiency as well as in satisfaction to the employees if both sides will coöperate in their mutual interest. The Rocky Mountain Fuel Company, which under the presidency of Miss Josephine Roche set out on this course, reports the following significant facts for the year of depression:

> While coal production in Colorado as a whole fell 17.5 percent in 1930, the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company's output dropped 13 percent.
>
> In spite of the fall of output, the company's cost of production was reduced 19 cents a ton.
>
> Output per day per man increased more than half a ton over 1929, and 1.22 tons over 1928. The 1930 figure was 1.79 tons above the state average.
>
> Mine accidents were substantially reduced, and there were no fatalities.
>
> There was a reduction of 11 percent in the company's administrative and selling costs.
>
> Although less coal was sold than in 1929, the company's general condition improved.
>
> The average daily wage of the miners was actually a little higher in 1930 than in 1929, being $8.
>
> Average annual earnings of the miners dropped from $2,104 to $1,770. This was partly due to the fact that fewer days could be worked. But it was also due to the fact that more men were employed than the year before. Layoffs were avoided, and existing work was rotated, as a measure against unemployment. This policy was adopted at the suggestion of the unions.

WILL the bulk of the wealth in the United States be administered by trust companies at the will of the dead? Will this mortmain lead to a situation similar to that which prevailed in England, where in 1536 the monasteries had gained control of a third to a half of the land, and Henry VIII confiscated it? Shall we have a repetition, under modern industrial conditions, of the concentration of wealth represented by church or other feudal ownership of land in Mexico, in the Philippines? Professor Irving Fisher, speaking to the trust-company division of the American Bankers' Association, pointed out this danger, citing an estimate that estates valued at more than $5,500,000,000 are annually probated by trust companies. Of course, many of these estates are handled by the trust companies only during the period of settlement; yet long-term trusts, permanently administered by banks, are increasing. The question arises whether the public interest in this wealth, in the manner and time of its investment and in the exercise of the control which it gives, is not superior to the interest of individual testators and their legatees. Certainly if, in the long run, this mortmain is seen to cut across the public interest, a sharp conflict will arise.

The Death of the World

THE death of The New York World is an event which has significance far beyond the city in which it was published. It illustrates some of the chief trends in journalism today—trends to which insufficient attention is paid, in view of their importance.

The suspension of these three papers—The Morning, The Evening and The Sunday World—is regrettable from every point of view. To all but a little handful of the more than 2,800 men and women who are suddenly thrown out of employment, at a time when there are already thousands of competent journalists walking the streets of New York, it is a personal calamity. For the country as a whole, it destroys one of the small group of more liberal papers, and the one which had the most potent influence in the Democratic party. Liberal-minded New Yorkers, who had two papers with whose editorial views they were in substantial accord, now have but one. The three Pulitzer brothers have had the humiliation of being forced to admit that they could not keep afloat an enterprise which their father had made into an overwhelming success. Messrs. Howard and Scripps and their associates, who bought The World, undoubtedly put through a shrewd stroke of business; but they are too good newspapermen themselves not to share the community's regret that the action was made possible in the first place.

The official announcements all speak of the merging of The World and The Evening Telegram; but this is of course true only in a technical sense. Two newspapers are never really merged; one swallows the other. It is always the purchaser which survives. Advertising contracts are carried over; a few selected feature writers and cartoonists appear in the "combined" paper, but the result is the same as if these men had been hired in-

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dividually to transfer their allegiance. What has actually happened is that The World is dead and The Telegram is the residuary legatee.

Whether the paper could have been rescued is a question which will long be debated among newspaper people, who have perhaps a morbid interest in such matters. At the time of its demise it was losing almost $2,000,000 a year, and its assets were so depleted that they would have carried the paper on for only another three months. The dilemma of The World was no mystery: it had been publicly discussed for years. The better-class readers of The Morning World had been lured away by the superior quality of news reporting in the columns of the ably edited, conservative Times and Herald-Tribune, while the tabloids had captured most of those who want sensationalism. The World's brilliant editorial page appealed to a more intelligent group than did its news columns; but the readers attracted during the past decade by the editorials of Walter Lippmann and his colleagues could hardly have numbered more than 10 or 12 percent of the total circulation. The Evening World, more "popular" than the morning edition, continued to earn money for a longer period, but finally found itself in the same predicament. Both papers, on the day they were suspended, still had impressive circulations—smaller than they had in their best days, but still larger than those of journals in other cities which earn millions of dollars annually.

One weakness was the large expense of operation, which had not been reduced, and could not be, in proportion to the decline in circulation. Another was a psychological factor in regard to the advertising, which is the breath of life to every newspaper nowadays. Advertisers do not like to be associated with anything but a success; they had rather spend their money in a paper with 200,000 circulation, on the way up, than in one with 400,000 on the way down. The World was, and had been for years, on the way down. Once the slide began, it became harder and harder to stop it. The three sons of Joseph Pulitzer did their best; they employed the most competent newspaper men they could find and put large sums at their disposal, without avail. While it is impossible to blame them for what happened, it is highly probable that if the elder Pulitzer had lived, the debacle would not have taken place. Journalism is one occupation in which the personal equation still ranks high; successful publishers are born, and no synthetic product is just as good. Pulitzer would have seen the *cul de sac* before his papers got into it, and his native genius would have found some way of escape.

Of the unsuccessful bids for the property, that which undoubtedly aroused the widest public interest was the one made by the members of the staff. These men and women, many of whom had served The World for more than a quarter of a century, suddenly saw the foundations of their whole life's work destroyed beneath their feet; and they made a brave attempt to rescue themselves by buying the papers and continuing them on a coöperative basis. The effort was doomed to failure largely because of the heavy annual deficit which must be faced. They might have assembled five million dollars or so—the price which the Scripps-Howard chain is reported to have paid—but it was hopeless to seek to get together the additional five or six millions to cover the losses inevitable in the next few years, no matter how ably and economically the paper might be conducted. The schools of journalism throughout the country, if they took the fate of The World's employees to heart, might well, it seems to us, close their doors. Certainly the incident gives effective rebuttal to the argument their professors are so fond of advancing, that journalism is a profession comparable in every way to law and medicine.

The most important fact about the whole melancholy business is that every other serious bid for The World should have come from the owners of newspaper chains, several of whom were prepared to continue the paper as an independent entity. When there are a dozen or twenty journals all earning money for a common treasury, it is possible to carry along one paper which is losing money, in the hope that it will finally come "out of the red." There are, moreover, important economies to be effected under this scheme—editorial matter can be syndicated, supplies bought in larger bulk, high-priced business executives can be employed and the cost of their services allocated among the members of the group. It remains true that a newspaper chain, like an individual paper, must be the lengthened shadow of one man; but given the man, his shadow is likely to be much longer and blacker if he is a multiple publisher than if he controls only one paper. There is no space here for consideration of the complicated problem of the social effects of syndicate journalism, which has its good side as well as its bad. It is important to remember, however, that only by happy accident did the death of The World strengthen a strongly progressive chain, and not one of markedly conservative tendencies.

The Meiklejohn Experiment

THE Experimental College of the University of Wisconsin has since its inception been regarded as one of the most promising enterprises in its field of investigation, i. e., the education of college students in the freshman and sophomore years. It was undertaken under circumstances which were both unfavorable and favorable to its success. In the midst of a large state university it had to meet and satisfy conditions of adjustment to a system already established, a difficult situation which could not have existed in the case of an isolated institution created, as it were, *ad hoc*. By virtue of its

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environment its results were subjected to immediate test, as its students passed on into the third and fourth years of college, in competition with those who had come up through the regular procedure of the first two years.

Its methods, if approved, might be given immediately a wider application through the main body of the College of Letters and Science. The success of the experiment would naturally be determined by the applicability of its findings in general, but it would not necessarily result in the adoption of its experimental plan *in toto*, and the reorganization of the entire college on its lines. Like other experiments which run counter to formal tradition and habit, the Experimental College has met with criticism which has not been without animus—something of which may be seen in the premature announcement of its abandonment.

The Experimental College has not been discontinued. What has happened is that, in view of the completion in 1932 of a five-year period of studying the teaching problems concerned with the freshman and sophomore years, the Advisers have reported to the Faculty of the College of Arts and Letters that this is the proper time for assessing its results and determining a future policy. In order that this may be done without the hampering effect of future commitments, it is recommended that in the academic year 1931-32 no freshman shall be admitted to the Experimental College. Next year the present freshman class will continue its course through the sophomore year. The Advisers will prepare the report of their experience in dealing with freshman and sophomore instruction and submit it for discussion to the committee of the faculty now engaged in studying this subject or to a committee specially appointed for the purpose. In a covering statement Dr. Meiklejohn explains that "these proposals are made by the Advisers of the Experimental College on their own initiative, and, so far as I know, without suggestion from any person outside their own ranks."

The Experimental College was established in 1926 by vote of the Faculty of Letters and Science, which is now given an opportunity to take such further action as it sees fit. Conceivably the faculty may vote to continue the experiment in its present form, in which case there will have occurred no interruption in the existence of the Experimental College. It may introduce certain of the methods of the Experimental College into the educational structure of the two first college years and at the same time provide for the continuation of experiment and observation in matters which the Experimental College has defined. Some of these are indicated in the present report drawn up by Dr. Meiklejohn for the Advisers:

> The problems which the college, under its direction from the Faculty, has been studying fall into three groups—(1) the relative values of a course of study made up from separate subjects and a course integrated into a single subject, (2) the relative values of classroom instruction and tutorial guidance, and (3) the relative values of scattered residence and of group living.

Under the second of these topics Dr. Meiklejohn submits a model outline for discussion considering, (1) the supply and training of teachers, (2) educational results for students, and (3) the organization of experiments, upon which the results of the Experimental College may be expected to throw light. One aspect of the Experimental College indeed, which has received less notice than others, is its function as a training school for college teachers. No plan could be devised which would bring the teacher so directly face to face with his problem of instruction and enable him so promptly to test his results, as his day by day meetings with students singly, or in small groups.

It will therefore be at least a year before the outcome of the Wisconsin experiment will be determined and its results appraised. Meanwhile it can be asserted confidently that the several hundred young men have benefited by a unified course of study with immediate and explicit direction and under inspiring leadership; and that a score or more of selected college teachers have had an opportunity to make their teaching something of a fine art. No one who has visited the college could remain unimpressed by the spirit of individual enthusiasm and common fellowship which was evident in faculty and students alike, and which made of education a coöperative enterprise. Nor can it be doubted that the findings of the committees appointed to review the course of the experiment will be of value in respect to both the general situation and the special problems of the University of Wisconsin.

The Experimental College, located in an established institution, faced certain difficulties, and these were emphasized by the fact that the institution was a state university. A state university has special responsibilities toward its own people. While the Experimental College may make a large contribution toward the general educational situation, it is difficult to demonstrate immediate and peculiar advantages to the state. The appeal of the Experimental College must necessarily be to a group of experimental students unusually free from conventional attitudes and preconceptions toward college life. To recruit a body of these students it is necessary to pass beyond state lines; and while the gain to a local institution of having in its midst this more cosmopolitan group, may be a real one, it is not easy to convince taxpayers that special appropriations should be made for the education of outlanders. It is unfortunate that the Experimental College did not draw into its ranks more students from Wisconsin. Every president of a state university must sell his institution as a whole to the state. In this case President Frank and Dr. Meiklejohn were inhibited from such a course by the ethics

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of experiment itself, which forbids the publishing of premature conclusions. It may be regretted that some such ethical standard does not pertain to criticism of experiment.

It is scarcely surprising that in less than four years the people of Wisconsin have not fully realized the value of their experiment in college education. There are, however, signs that appreciation has been growing. A widely spread notion that the teaching cost for a student in the Experimental College was far in excess of that in the College of Letters and Science has been dissipated by figures given out by the University, which are respectively $208 and $196 per annum. A committee of the legislature in a recent report called attention to this fact, and declared that the Experimental College was establishing a new criterion of eductional achievement, depending on actual work accomplished and progress in thinking. An article in The Capital Times of Madison, by Mr. Ernest L. Meyer, points out the value of the unified and integrated course of study as opposed to the bargain-counter methods of free election. This article emphasizes what The New Republic so insistently pointed out some years ago when the achievement of Dr. Meiklejohn at Amherst was under discussion, i. e., the unique value to an institution of learning of a great teacher and master of teachers. The words are reminiscent of our own:

> There is more at stake in the fate of the Experimental College than a system. There is also the fate of a man. It would be tragic if the faculty lost the services and inspiration of so distinguished a leader as Dr. Alexander Meiklejohn. His presence in a group of students is a breath of life. . . . He does not hand down his wisdom; he lifts you up to it. The Experimental College may go; it is only his tool, which can be replaced or refashioned, but if he goes he will leave a space against the skies where once a great man stood and which never can be filled.

Mr. Justice Holmes at Ninety

MR. JUSTICE HOLMES' ninetieth birthday, which takes place on March 8, is an event which belongs not to him but to the nation. It has been his supreme achievement to make the qualities of his mind the symbol of what we value most highly in the national life. He represents an America which exists less today than formerly, and perhaps never existed so completely as we now suppose, looking back fondly upon an imagined golden day. The experimental attitude toward social problems, the proud faith in the power of reason, the refusal to make his private scheme of thought the measure of the State's well being—these have been the marks of the temper in which he has approached the problems of his time, the qualities which have caused so many persons to give him an importance in their cosmos which far outruns his position as a member of the Supreme Court. He has shown that a great lawyer can also be—and perhaps, must also be—a great man: philosopher as well as jurist, scientist no less than judge.

It is for the expert to assess the exact value of his specific contributions to the science of life. Even laymen are entitled to affirm that they are important; but an effort so many-sided and profound can only be judged when a later generation has measured the consequences of his work. The plain citizen will remember less learning than temper, less doctrine than spirit. A power to be tolerant, a willingness to abdicate his own sense of wisdom where he is not entitled to enforce it, an appreciation that time changes the horizons toward which a past age has strained—these are the outstanding features by which he has been distinguished. His attitude has embodied that humane spirit which, at each stage of civilization, marks the emergence of the finer aspect of man's creativeness. It has confidence in Truth even while it is humble in its presence. It has joy in the search for wisdom and the artist's pride in molding it into significant forms. It has a sense of the past without slavery to its traditions; a care for the present without sacrifice of the future.

To understand the essence of the faith for which it stands one must seek analogies in other directions of great achievement than the law. There has been something in his work of Darwin's patient and relentless search for hypotheses which explain grim fact, something, also, of Darwin's noble willingness to abandon cherished doctrine which new discovery has made outworn. There has been an untiring desire to know the causes of things, which makes the masters of all sciences members of the same great fellowship. The unchecked humility of Clerk-Maxwell, the rigorous discipline of Willard Gibbs, the daring humility of Maitland—these are the characteristics with which we recognize his kinship. Take away all the change his decisions have wrought in the fabric of American law and life, and there would still remain an abiding example, an inspiration to all those who seek the basis of its secret.

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EDITORS

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK ALVIN JOHNSON
E. C. LINDEMAN LEWIS MUMFORD GILBERT SELDES
R. G. TUGWELL LEO WOLMAN

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What Planning Might Do

Goals and Methods for an Economic Brain

IF WE ARE to have an Economic General Staff and a National Industrial Council, what objectives ought they to seek? What criterion of policy may be set up? Bodies of this sort might become helpless in confusion, going through a series of ineffectual and meaningless motions, unless they knew pretty definitely what they wanted to achieve. Or they might set out to achieve a number of goals which were mutally incompatible. Or they might try for something which would not be desirable.

Our late "new era" of supposedly endless prosperity had two pretensions which, though they were far from being realities under an unplanned order, may be taken as natural starting points for a plan. Their desirability has gained wide acceptance. One is the "economy of high wages"; the other, the stabilization of industry and employment. The failure to effectuate them has caused surprise among the strongest adherents of an unplanned economy. Among the general population it has caused breadlines, broken families, suicides, rickety children, scurvy, tuberculosis, hopeless and disordered minds. It is worth while to challenge the business order to get down to brass tacks about these pretensions. Either it should abandon them or else seriously set to work to make them good.

Precisely what do we mean by "the economy of high wages"? It is possible to interpret the phrase in an absurd way. This is to assume that individual employers, by intention and choice, pay high and increasing wages, in order that the wage earners may buy back what the employers produce. There are two objections to this interpretation. The first is that it does not happen. Some employers do not pay as high wages as they can—it is not to the immediate interest of a collar manufacturer, for instance, to increase the wages of his employees so that they may buy more food and pay more rent—and some employers cannot pay high enough wages. The purchasing power of the public is, furthermore, a function not only of its earnings but of the prices it has to pay. The second objection is that it puts the cart before the horse by assuming that the main object of society is to enable employers to sell whatever they happen to want to produce, whether it be a patent medicine, a useless gadget or a jerry-built house.

From a sensible point of view, the "economy of high wages" means that, since we have the technical capacity to produce enough for everyone, everyone ought to have a large enough income to buy what he needs. We should run our society on the basis of large production and engineering economy rather than on the basis of minimum production and scarcity profits. More than that, we shall have to run it so if we are to run it without disastrous breakdowns, because our industrial plant is set up for mass production and mass consumption. The quality and usefulness of the goods consumed also must be considered, if we regard the task as that of raising standards of living rather than merely as a selling problem. And we must remember that we are concerned not only about the wage earners' incomes, but about the salary earners' and the farmers'.

Industrial stabilization is certainly not incompatible with the economy of high wages. We cannot maintain purchasing power without sufficient employment. Nor can we maintain employment without distributing enough purchasing power. Moreover, we want a progressively improving standard, as the possibilities of production advance. More goods and more leisure—not penury and unemployment. Even if we could get it, we should not want what some conservative writers imply by stabilization—a steady operation of our economy on a dead level of purchasing power for the average consumer.

If we are to get a level of wages, salaries and farm incomes rising with any close relationship to the technical possibility of increase in production, we must begin by paying special attention to the lowest wages and marginal occupations; these create ruinous competition for the others and steadily weigh down the average. In this effort we shall have to seek two goals—higher real incomes, especially for those at the bottom of the scale, and fuller employment for the underemployed. We shall have to increase productivity in such a manner that the smallest incomes will be brought up and the lowest standards of living raised. We should also seek, as productivity increases, to increase the leisure of those who work too long, and to increase the opportunity to earn of those who cannot work long enough.

$5,000 a Year At the Lowest

How far could we go in the direction of higher living standards if we could properly organize production and consumption, given our present equipment of natural resources, labor energy, productive equipment and technical skill? We can only guess, before making a more detailed study, but experts hold the opinion that we could go far. Only this winter Mr. Flanders, one of the officers of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, stated

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that we could smother the population with an avalanche of necessities and luxuries such as "no utopian dreamer in his busiest slumbers ever dreamed." We do not want a smothered population; before the avalanche of goods had overwhelmed us we should want more leisure, more recreation, more chance for individual creation. But let us suppose, for example, that it is possible to set a temporary mark, to be achieved in ten years, which would furnish a minimum income of $5,000 a year, for a forty-hour five-day week, and which would make sure that nobody but the unfit or those in transit from one job to another would be denied the opportunity to earn and work this much. We could not hit this mark without at least doubling the national income. The average income per person gainfully employed has recently been, even in prosperous times, not over $2,000. A modest goal, in view of the living standards generally called American, and in view of the technical possibilities of industry—but one attainable only by gigantic endeavor! It would be capable of being used as a criterion of policy. To it no department of national action, no problem of means and measures, would be irrelevant. And until a goal like this is achieved, questions regarding the advisability of a further extension of leisure, or additional production of luxuries unavailable to those with incomes below $5,000, disappear from the picture. The nation as a whole is in no danger of being surfeited with material prosperity before something like this is achieved.

Those who suppose that an end like this could be gained solely by the will of individual employers, or solely by compulsion exerted upon them, whether by organized labor or by minimum-wage laws, are naïve indeed. I do not mean to underestimate the psychological importance, as a preparation for planning, of the present acceptance by important employers of the doctrine that high wages are desirable. And one of the major requirements of a planned economy which still has employers and is not based upon a dictatorship in the interest of the workers will certainly be a great extension of labor organization. We shall have to have unions which are ready to exert their power in the direction of better management and more productivity in their several industries, like the clothing-workers' and the railroad-shop crafts, rather than unions which stop at blind combativeness and restriction, like the old miners' union and most of the building trades. In spite of all that separate employers and unions may do, however, we must recognize the basic fact that there are great marginal industries, like textiles and bituminous coal, which are so badly planned and organized that they cannot pay even as high wages as the existing average. In the most prosperous industries, there are marginal plants which maintain an unduly wide spread between wages and selling prices. And if we think of the problem, as we shall have to think of it, not only in terms of money incomes received, but in terms of the prices paid by workers for the goods consumed, we shall find industries furnishing these goods which may be in a more favorable position than those paying the lowest wage rates, but which, because of poor organization or profiteering, are charging too much for what they supply. Real estate and building furnish an example.

One of the first tasks, therefore, will be to institute some form of planning and control in the several marginal industries, and also in the more fortunate but still socially inefficient industrial groups. We shall, for instance, have to have a textile plan, a coal plan, a housing plan. Indeed, there ought to be a staff for every industrial group, heading into the General Staff. Does this mean stimulating industrial combination, abolishing or amending the anti-trust laws? If so, it must mean far more as well. Combination must take place on the basis of engineering, rather than of merely financial design. There must be public participation to prevent the gains from being drawn off in speculative profits. And something must be done to safeguard any workers whose jobs may be imperiled if it is temporarily necessary to curtail any type of production, or if advances in technology reduce employment. A program of this sort would probably not create less employment in the long run—though it would create more aggregate leisure. But shifts of labor would be inevitable.

Attention would also have to be directed to expanding the production of the industries making consumers' goods likely to be bought by those with incomes of $5,000. What these goods are may be roughly ascertained by studies of family budgets. But speculation on expansion of these industries, resulting in overcapacity, would have to be avoided. In this field, requirements might be estimated in advance, year by year, by carrying budget studies back through retail goods to manufacturer and raw-material producer. How many automobiles, for instance, of the types available to the $5,000 income, would be needed each year between 1932 and 1942?

Three boards, committees, commissions—what you will—at once emerge as administrative necessities in any such program. All, of course, would be subordinate to the principle economic brain.

Planning New Investment

One of the more important would have to do with the guidance of new investment—private and public. We want enough new investment to be able to produce the essential goods; we do not want so much as to produce more than can be bought at expected income levels. We want the investment to go into the production, first, of the necessities, next, of the luxuries. We do not want to make surplus Cadillac sixteens and commuter airplanes while the wage earners have not sufficient decent housing. We do not want investment to proceed in a wave-like motion through time, creating suc-

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cessively feast and famine. In so far as private investment may do this, after planning of production schedules for whole industries in relation to expected purchasing power, we want to balance it by public investment. Such a board must know where savings arise, how great they are and how far credit is temporarily substituted for savings. It must be close to any credit control we may exercise through the Federal Reserve System; but its main job will be organization of investment. Now we do not even know how much we save, how much we invest or where it goes.

Private investment now proceeds through two main channels. One is the floating by investment bankers of new security issues which are sold more to serve the profit of the bankers than to serve the need of society for new productive facilities in specific directions. The other is the reinvestment of profits by industrial companies themselves. Both will have to be planned and regulated in the public interest. Publicity given to future production programs may help in both cases. But something further will probably be necessary. Security issues ought to be subjected to the approval of the board of investment. There is a partial precedent for this in the present submission of foreign loans to the Department of State—though this supervision is exercised for political purposes and not in accordance with social and economic plan. And use of corporate saving must be regulated. Perhaps it will have to be taxed away and allocated by the investment board. There may be occasions when the required action is to prevent corporate saving from arising in such large volume, by reducing the prices charged or raising the wages paid, in the industry in question. Possibly industrial combinations will themselves, in view of the production programs laid out, avoid overinvestment.

An Organized Labor Market

A second nucleus would have the job of organizing the labor market. It would supervise a national system of labor exchanges; it would administer—so far as this was not done by industrial or state agencies—unemployment insurance; it would foresee transits of labor out of some industries or localities and into others, and provide such training or other adjusting measures as were necessary. It would keep close tab on wage statistics. The board to be set up under Senator Wagner's bill for labor exchanges, just passed, makes a beginning.

Professor Sumner H. Slichter has, in The New Republic, pointed out what a board of this sort might do if it were given the same powers to help labor which the Federal Farm Board has been given to help farmers. It might, in addition to the above functions, actively organize unions, and could even finance them in withholding from the market what they have to sell, in times of surplus and low prices—in other words, finance strikes. Of course, labor has never asked government loans to support strikes, and the function of planning would be to remove causes for strikes rather than to promote them. Nevertheless, a board of this sort must be actively concerned in maintaining the planned schedules of wages and hours, and it could scarcely do this in many cases without the help of organized labor. It must be a national policy to encourage labor organization rather than to harass and suppress it by injunction and otherwise.

Geographical Planning

A third board would have oversight over planning on the basis of economic geography, of the sort which is now done in some cities or regions, and is just beginning to be done by states. Where are our resources; for what are the various types of land best adapted? Where are industries best located; what is likely to be the migration of factories and population? What are our recreational requirements? Based on the work of this agency would be such things as an agricultural land policy, reforestation, location of power plants and transmission lines, road programs, national park and playground facilities, federal aspects of water supply, federal public works of all kinds and any possible federal contribution to housing and regional planning. Conservation in the interest of future production would have to be closely related to it.

If we did not already have a Federal Farm Board, we should have to create one. The Board has suffered by having to deal with an emergency by methods which are not radical enough, but it is learning by its experience. We shall not really get down to fundamentals until we have a land policy and a really efficient production policy.

The Federal Board will probably have to be supplemented by regional bodies, to work out the best means of land utilization in the various agricultural regions, to conduct experimental farming enterprises as a guide to the best types of unit and method, to lay out production programs and correlate the interests of various types of farming. We have in agriculture, perhaps because of its straits, one of the best of all opportunities for planning. Methods, land ownership, markets—all are changing almost overnight. And we have a large group of qualified experts throughout the country in the agricultural colleges and county extension agents.

Distribution of goods demands close attention. What about the apparently increasing spread between retail and wholesale prices? How can the presumably increased efficiency of large-scale merchandising through chain stores, department stores, mail-order houses, be made to serve the public interest to a greater degree? Do we need fewer senseless varieties, less competition in style changes? Must we not establish scientific testing and publicity of its results in consumers' goods, similar to that now done for government purchases by the Bureau of Standards, and for a relatively few consumer members by Consumers' Research, Inc.?

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International Trade and Finance

Questions about tariffs, foreign investment, war debts, taxation, fit closely into this program.

A general protective tariff is clearly unjust and fits into no plan except that of a few favored manufacturers. But can we support merely a *laissez faire* policy like that of universal free trade? We may abolish import duties, but we shall, in addition, have to rationalize international trade. We want to achieve, all over the world, the same sort of purpose we are seeking at home. We want to raise standards of living and prevent disturbing collapses of activity. That will involve using the resources of the whole world in the most efficient manner. There will probably have to be created a new technique of rationalized import and export quotas. Foreign investment will have to be adjusted to needs of production, export and import. Arbitrary payments like those for reparations and war debts cannot be allowed to interfere with world-wide efficiency of production and exchange. As planning grows in other nations, adjustments of this nature will be easier to achieve, but in the meantime something may be done. We should not, for instance, during prosperous times pour investments into government bond issues of weak countries for unjustified expenditures in public utilities, and then embargo loans to Russia for a solid program of increased production of necessities, when Russia needs these loans in order to increase her purchases from us and when we need the outlet for production which the purchases by the Russian government would supply.

We shall probably have to tax more heavily, by means of graduated income and inheritance taxes, not for the purpose of penalizing the rich, but in order to further a more useful and productive employment of the national surplus, in directions where it would not normally gravitate in the course of speculation or investment for profit. No advantage is gained when private wealth is taken to be wasted by government; the important thing is to plan so good a use for governmental expenditures that taxation will enrich the people as a whole.

Action for specific purposes, like better regulation or public ownership of utilities, which is already going on, should not be postponed until some all-wise planning body gives the word; we should merely bear in mind that in advocating schemes of this sort, or, indeed, in discussing any other phase of public policy, something which helps to create a cell for a planned civilization is to be preferred to something which attempts vainly to return to an outworn ideal or a lost cause like "free competition." Plenty of constructive work—enough to keep everyone busy—remains to be done in every town, every factory, every state and every industry. The planning idea is one which, properly understood, does not restrict energy, but liberates it. Central planning has not the slightest chance to do its work without activity of the same sort in every unit, large or small, without piecemeal effort of the highest quality, without close attention to specific issues and details.

In the minds of many, particularly of industrialists, who have talked vaguely about national planning, there is a confusion which any realistic approach to the subject must, I think, dispel. They do not understand how large a break any effective plan must make with the traditional conception of profits. It is of the essence of an effective plan to put public interest above private and, in doing so, to dispel uncertainty as much as possible. This means that speculative profits must disappear. Social utilities cannot, under a desirable plan, be converted into private fortunes. Profits as a payment of management, profits as an inducement to investment, may remain, but they must of necessity be limited and regularized. We need not, perhaps, reduce existing large incomes, but we shall not be able to allow an indefinite number of new ones to be created, or of existing ones to grow, at least until the tail of the procession has been brought somewhere near the head. Will industrial management be willing to accept security of return as a substitute for possibly great windfalls? Will it really prefer regularization to competition and risk? Is the chance to do a good job a strong enough motive, with the existing managers of industry, to supersede gambling? On this depends the opportunity to plan nationally, without ejecting the existing management from power.

Possible Ends

If we do start to plan, there is no telling what the end may be. After such a modest ten-year goal is achieved, it may appear that people really do not want to go much farther in that particular direction. We may become more interested in the quality of our satisfactions than in the quantity. We may want more beautiful communities in which to live, more chance to get back to the woods, to have camp fires, to swim, to fish, to hunt. Expanded opportunity for recreation is already one of the products of machine civilization; it may ultimately become of major importance. We may want to paint pictures, to act in plays, to grow gardens, to read, to make our own furniture. We may decide to decentralize our industry geographically, to have fewer kinds of things made by machine for everyone and more chance to create variety for ourselves. Discussions about such cultural questions will become increasingly important. But the chief cultural value of planning will remain, in my opinion, what it is at the start. Instead of being individually at war with society, instead of being baffled and burdened by an irrelevant environment of social forces, we shall be at work, through society, mastering our life and creating it as a whole. We shall have a warm and active bond with our fellows.

George Soule.

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Silver

The Causes and Consequences of the Depression in Its Value, and Proposed Remedies

A WEEK or two ago, a subcommittee of the United States Senate proposed a huge "silver loan" to China, partly for the purpose of aiding that country and partly in the hope that the action might have a beneficial effect upon the price of silver itself. That precious metal, as everyone knows, has lately fallen to an extremely low price; and this fact is having a catastrophic effect upon the lives of many millions of persons, in China, Mexico, India and elsewhere. Many persons of the present generation are only dimly aware that there is any such thing as a "silver question," though their elders remember keenly the historic days, three and a half decades ago, when "the cross of gold" was being forcefully described by the late William Jennings Bryan.

Just what is it that has happened to silver? The question may be answered best by glancing at a table of silver quotations, giving the price of the metal expressed in gold. These show that after settling at a level of from fifty to sixty-five cents or thereabouts before the World War, silver, from the opening of that struggle, began to feel the profound effects of changes in monetary values. It first sank sharply to about forty-five cents per ounce following the depreciation of British sterling, then entered upon a steady period of advance which took it to $1.37½ at the end of 1919. The advance was due to unbalanced trade with the East, necessitating huge shipments in that direction, extensive hoarding in India, and various war factors. It was during this period that our own government took its long hoarded stock of silver dollars and bullion from the Treasury, and sent the whole to India, there to help the British government keep up its payments—300,000,000 ounces in all. A perpendicular drop to fifty-three cents followed the closing of the struggle; and there ensued a period of comparative stability at prices between fifty-two and seventy-two cents. This carried the story to 1926. But, in the latter year, India again became a disturbing factor. She went over to the gold standard, sold silver, and was followed by other countries in disposing of accumulated stocks. The result has been a new period of depreciation; and, since the middle of 1928, the decline has been precipitous. Today silver is worth little more than twenty-seven cents an ounce.

Needless to say, this great change of value has produced remarkable effects upon trade and industry. Silver is still the monetary medium of a large part of the human race. Its depreciation, as measured in gold, means that those who use silver must count on receiving for their labor correspondingly less of the products of gold-using countries. If a typewriter costs $50 in New York, when silver is $1 an ounce and when a pound of rubber sells for one ounce of silver, a change in the value of silver to fifty cents will halve the rubber producer's control over typewriters. If, at the same time, the typewriter drops to $40 because of a fall in prices in the United States, the rubber grower's sacrifice is less, but the readjustment of values is likely to take even longer than in the first instance—such is the force of inertia and custom in their retarding effect upon price readjustment. The effect thus indicated is reflected in the sharp changes of business in relations between West and East. The fall in silver has prevented the Orient from importing; while the world crisis at large, and the depression both in the United States and in Europe, have reduced buying power in the Western hemisphere. The past year has been bad for many reasons. It is natural to lay the blame on a scapegoat—the declining value of silver itself—and to say that it is the "natural" instability of the metal that is at fault.

Yet silver has been no more unstable than other metals. Contrary to current superstition, it had, up to about 1916, been for nearly a generation more stable than gold. Today, a price of twenty-seven cents is not much farther below a pre-war price of fifty cents or a little more, than the price of several of the non-ferrous metals is below their pre-war values. Silver has had many disturbing experiences during and since the War, and none was more unsettling than the throwing of our own great hoard upon the market, only to have it thrown back again when the War was over and the temporary demand had ceased. During the past five or six years, the production of silver has not varied a great deal, running from a low point of 240,000,000 ounces (1924) to a high of 262,000,000 ounces (1929). The variation has not been 10 percent, and from year to year seldom over 3 percent. This is in spite of the strongly disturbing effect of American-government policy in buying some 200,000,000 ounces at the artificial price of $1.25 per ounce between 1920 and 1923, with consequent stimulation of output.

If there has been no overproduction in the ordinary sense of that term, and if prices (although fluctuating widely) have not gone to much greater extremes than were attained by other articles of common use, the question of what has disturbed the

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value of silver just at this time, and in so spectacular a way, remains. The answer is found in two sets of conditions. During the War the United States Treasury, as already explained, gave up 300,000,000 ounces, or one-fifth more than a year's normal production, for Indian use. Great Britain paid for the silver; but of course did not return the metal itself. We bought new silver, some years later—the product of our own mines—at a time when otherwise many of these mines would not have been fully worked, owing to the lower post-war price which silver would ordinarily have commanded. When war conditions no longer existed, India ceased to feel the extraordinary impetus to hoard, nor was her balance of trade so favorable as during the War. She accordingly began to give up silver, relatively speaking, and would have done so in any case. In addition, Indian nationalism was calling for a new arrangement as to monetary standards and central banking. Plans for a central bank were set on foot as early as 1926, and at the same time steps toward the introduction of a gold standard were ordered. As a result of the work of the Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance, a law was passed in 1927 that:

(1) The Indian Treasury silver reserve be reduced by selling silver.

(2) The rate of exchange officially set for the Indian rupee be set at one shilling sixpence (or about thirty-six and one-quarter cents), a figure considerably higher than the rupee was worth (as bullion).

Taken together, the two modifications of the Indian currency regime naturally tended to cut down the demand for silver that would otherwise have been felt. The sales made by the Calcutta Treasury did not in the long run reduce India's holdings of silver. They were 360,000,000 ounces when the sales were ordered and they were about 419,000,000 ounces four years later—97,000,000 having been sold meanwhile. The increase, notwithstanding constant selling, was due to the steady inward flow of rupees which more than took the place of the sales and indicated that the period of excess hoarding was, for the time at least, over. As for the alteration of the exchange rate, that of course tended to reduce the demand for bullion that would otherwise have made itself felt. The exchange alteration has had a secondary effect, moreover, in that it has, according to the weight of Indian testimony, increased economic depression in India, as unduly high valuations of currency units invariably do—with the result that there has been materially less call for silver than would otherwise have been the case. Nevertheless, during 1930, reliable estimates show that India absorbed 94,500,000 ounces, or about 13,000,000 ounces more than in 1929. China took possibly 123,000,000 ounces, and her lessened demand probably offset India's increase, leaving the net consumptive demand of the Orient practically stable. The following figures compiled by Messrs. Handy and Harman of New York, the well known bullion authorities, will show the situation at the close of 1930 of the production and consumption of silver:

WORLD PRODUCTION

(In millions of fine ounces)

Production	1930	1929
United States	50.4	61.2
Mexico	105.7	108.7
Canada	26.2	22.4
All other countries	61.4	68.6
Total production	243.7	260.9
Other supplies:		
Debasement of British coinage	....	10.0
Demonetized coin:		
France	22.0	10.0
Indo-China	20.0	12.0
Sales by Indian government	29.5	35.0
Total	315.2	327.9

WORLD CONSUMPTION

India:		
Imports from the United States, Canada, England, France, Australia and others	95.3	79.2
Supplies from government reserves sold in India	4.5	7.3
	99.8	86.5
Less exports	5.3	4.7
Net Indian consumption	94.5	81.8
China (including Hongkong):		
Imports from the United States, Canada, England, India and others	125.9	136.7
Less exports	2.9	....
Net Chinese consumption	123.0	136.7
Germany	8.0	12.0
Arts and industries:		
In the United States and Canada	29.5	37.0
In England	6.0	6.5
Coinage:		
United States Mint	6.1	2.5
Hongkong dollars	14.0	16.0
Russia	....	3.5
Holland	....	3.0
Unaccounted for	34.1	28.9
Total	315.2	327.9

Suppose we assume, then, that there is no real statistical evidence to show anything in the nature of sustained overproduction of silver or confirmed and permanent change in its consumption. Does not that leave us very much at sea in explaining the low estate of silver itself? Not at all. As already shown, the depreciation of the metal is hardly more striking than that of other commodities of a similar sort. In addition, there are general considerations that need special study. Silver, like gold, is a

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money metal. It has depreciated in a monetary way for much the same reasons that for a long time prevented gold from appreciating, and are today tending to drive gold up, or commodities down, whichever way we choose to look at the matter.

Consider the actual facts in the situation. Goods have been enormously increased in quantity and decreased in cost in those countries where machine production has been widely developed. The natural result has been to render gold more costly—that is to say to make goods cheaper in gold (fall of prices). But silver is the money of nations whose development of machine methods or of mass production is relatively low. China and India have made little economic advance in the past ten years. Their costs for native goods, as measured in labor and capital, are probably higher today than they have ever been. China produces less relatively, due to war and civil disturbance; while India has been too busy with political agitation to give herself whole-heartedly to economic improvement. Both countries have found it unavoidable to give less goods than formerly for silver, or in other words, silver has fallen in price. Low productivity in the East means high local prices (measured in silver); and such high local prices are equivalent to correspondingly low values for silver itself as measured in gold. The Eastern countries, however, have had no complementary factor such as has been furnished in the West through the introduction of central banking and credit media; indeed, the East is farther behind in these regards today than ever. War and banditry have caused hoarding and money is less efficient per unit than before. This tends to produce scarcity values per unit of money—an offsetting influence—whereas in the West, by dispensing with money, we have tended to decrease its worth (tended to raise commodity prices, or in other words, to prevent them from falling as soon or as fast as they otherwise would). This offsetting influence should help to stabilize silver values sooner than would otherwise be the case; and to that extent to restore normal exchange with gold-using countries.

There is thus nothing peculiar about the status of silver; and therefore no reason to "do" anything about its value. Among the proposals recently put forward have been the making of a "silver loan" to China, the offer of a "plain" or "gold" loan, and the establishment of a buying agreement by the various governments. As to these suggestions, it is worth noting that a "silver loan" seems to be a proposal to cure the dog's bite with a hair of the dog himself. The difficulty of China grows out of an overplus of silver, not a shortage. She does not need a "silver loan." A gold loan to her, or to any other country would, doubtless, be welcome; but it would be spent not for silver, but for consumable goods. A purchasing agreement among governments might be so made up as to regularize sales and purchases, thus adapting or adjusting demand to supply and so eliminating "peaks" of fluctuation. Yet even here it must be remembered that this service of adjustment or equalization is exactly what the speculative bullion market does. We may well doubt whether government agreements will improve on the present situation. There is, however, no obvious harm to follow from such an agreement, provided it deals only with silver that would have been sold or bought for other considerations and without reference to any desire to "peg" the price. It might at any rate make the market situation a little more certainly calculable. It is true that much of the influence ascribed to India in the silver situation has been due to the fear of future dumping of silver on a still larger scale than hitherto. An agreement of the kind already referred to might mitigate this factor.

The world at large is passing through a price-adjustment revolution. It is a painful, and probably likely to be a long drawn-out, process. There is no safe or recognized method of price control, nor is one likely in this generation. Avoidance of excess production of all goods, abandonment of artificial pegging, abstinence from bank inflation and, so far as possible, current adaptation of consumption to current production will bring stability sooner than any other method. This is as true of silver as of any other commodity. It is tragic that fluctuations in the value of silver or gold should cause such acute suffering among so many millions of persons; but this is only one of several similar tragedies of the world today, when people are victimized by obscure economic developments which seem, at least for the present, to be entirely beyond control.

H. PARKER WILLIS.

Going Into Relievership

HOMER GRAVES, the sterling young farmer from out west of Woppington, came into Elmer Durkin's shop to buy a paper and get some free heat and conversation.

"How are they breaking by you?" the newsdealer asked.

"Nothin' extry, Elmer. Maybe I oughtn't to complain, though, considering the farmers that got hit so hard by the drought. Money is scarce, but at least we have food."

"I'm ashamed of you, Big Boy—a good Republican like you uttering that short and ugly word, 'food'! Call it 'agricultural rehabilitation.' That's what our best people are eating now, if at all."

"Probably you know what you're talkin' about, but I don't. The roads have been s' doggone muddy here lately that——"

"Say no more, Homer. I'll shoot you the scenario. At that, you're right about the drought. I guess it's the worst that was ever wished on us, and along with the hard times a couple million folks out there in the sticks have been on the ragged edge. Everybody got hep to this way back

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except Little Cheerio in the White House. You'd say this was right down his alley, but he couldn't see where it was anything to worry the old bean about. Give them a couple of kind words and lower freight rates on hay and everything would be jake. Can you tie that, Homer? The guys are thirsty and he hands them hay!

"He was more steamed up about the Wetness of the Wickersham Commission than the dryness of the corn belters.

"Well, sir, things rapidly got no better whatever, and finally Joe Robinson got up on his hind legs and yammered for twenty-five million smackers to grub-stake the drought sufferers. Those guys had been feeding our faces all their lives and now they were in a tough jam and it was up to us to hand them some food.

"When he heard the horrid word 'food' the Great Humanitarian threw up his mitts. Our government does not believe in feeding folks unless they are Belgians or Russians or Yugo-Slowuppians. It might feed the old mule, but not the wife and kiddies because that would be a dole.

" 'The Red Cross will look after you,' said Herby, 'if you just slip them ten million washers. Mutual self-help is your dish. If you had four legs it would be different. I can't give you anything but love.'

"Maybe he meant that all right, but how would it sound to you if you hadn't seen solid food since last Thursday and you had to walk seven miles for a drink of water?

"The Senate went to the mat with Herbert on that. The Red Cross strung along with the chief and said it never took Uncle's lousy jack—well, anyhow, not lately. Editors ankled back from hearty lunches and warbled, 'Attaboy, Hoover.' Nobody had a license to poke their beezer in the public crib unless they were politicians, manufacturers or doughboys. Otherwise it would be a dole. Billions for pie, they said, but not one jit for bread.

"All this time gimme letters were pouring into Washington by the carload and all they asked was 'When do we eat?' The Great Mitigator found himself jimmied into a position where he was supposed to think that starving babies was a swell idea. Also he managed the Smedley Butler racket in such a masterly way that folks thought his favorite newsreel was Mussolini running over little wops. I wouldn't fool you, mister, the boy is good!

"What pulled our Prexy out of the mess was a pair of two-dollar words some bright lad thought up. Hoover went into a huddle with the boys on the hill and said he would stand for a twenty-million-dollar loan for *agricultural rehabilitation*. 'Does that mean chow?' the Senate asked in its snooty way. Somebody ran Secretary Hyde into a corner and Artie broke down and admitted that a farmer might maybe nibble on what he got, if he got it. So Joe Robinson did a back flip out of the picture and they fell for this loan hooey."

"Well, that ought to help some."

"There's a catch in it, Homer. A farmer has to show security to cut in on this. The boys that need it the most have already hocked everything in sight, including the kitchen stove. Where is there any nourishment in that?

"Here is the Farm Board which has been buying grain to jack up the price. It's got enough wheat to sink the navy and it can't think of anything to do with the blame stuff. Sometimes our government looks just plain goofy. It's a wonder it isn't et by squirrels."

"Maybe you couldn't have done s' much better yourself, Elmer."

"Maybe not, but we had a guy once who could. There was a wow on human misery, what I mean. That baby would have made the government loosen up enough jack to do the job right. He'd have organized relief in a big engineering way and fed every dried-up farmer and every jobless person, dole or no dole. No kids would be going to bed hungry if he was running the works."

"Who was that?" asked the innocent farmer.

"A bird named Herbert Hoover," said Elmer. "I wonder what ever became of him."

FELIX RAY.

Letter from Inland

Born in the harbor town, you always remember
Ships, I suppose, and the low calls at night
Of fog-bound craft invisible and creeping
In desperate caution toward some friendly light,

And in your dreams the barges crumple white
Ruffles of foam before their sluggish beams,
And stars come riding shoreward through the night
On muted lifting swells; and in your dreams

Always, so I have heard, there are lonely bells
Clanking untunely on some lonelier sea,
And wharves, collectors of strange wastes and smells
Poured from long vanished vessels. But to me,

Stranger to waves, except the curls of loam
Behind the share, or wheat in summer wind,
To mist, except the autumn-smoke, to foam
Except brown clinging stuff that rides the thinned

Split torrents after rain, to me it seems
A malice cold and invisible resides
Where the high inland of the ocean gleams,
Flows in the intricate weaving of the tides,

And shows most treacherous when most asleep.
Then under the innocent surface light and shade
With subtle and dark insinuation creep—
I never see it but I am afraid.

H. BONER.

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Newsreels and Pictures

Chaplin and the Talkies.—That the silent Chaplin film will not destroy the talkies is not important; it is not desirable to destroy the talkies, but to make them good talkies, and there is not a director working in America today who could not learn a great deal about the talkie technique from observing this silent picture. The really important thing is that the talkies have not destroyed Chaplin and, by implication, have not destroyed any great silent picture.

It was noticeable that Chaplin was obviously worried by the talkies and took an odd way of anticipating difficulties. Although there are comparatively few subtitles in "City Lights," at least half of them are superfluous. The pantomime and the action are so clear that little explanation is necessary. When we saw a newspaper clipping about a new way to cure blindness, saw Chaplin read it to the blind girl, then read a subtitle dealing with the same subject, and finally saw Chaplin pointing to his own eye as he talked, something more than was necessary and something approaching the overdialogued talkies was given to us.

Corrupting the Newsreel.—In the days of the elaborate silent feature films the spectator always had a sense of profound relief when the newsreel flashed on with something definite, something unspoiled and entirely credible. The arrival of the sound mechanism heightened all these qualities and the newsreel with talk and sound was a great success in spite of the comparative stupidity of the words spoken. The necessity for arranging a succinct summary of what any notable man wanted to say presently began to give the newsreel a slightly artificial air. At about the same time the newsreel theater occurred, and although the idea was sound the execution was very bad. Most of the programs I have seen had about 10 percent of news, and belated news at that, and 90 percent of what newspaper readers know to be "features." Even these features were so palpably arranged that they did not have the freshness of the boxed-in little news items concerning two-headed calves and men who bite dogs and the other trivia which are supposed to make easy the reading of the ordinary newspaper.

A final and disastrous step was taken recently when the whole sound mechanism was virtually thrown away and the newsreel was reduced to a silent picture of an arranged or natural event, with a running commentary and explanation pasted in at the studio. (This is not yet general practice, but probably will become so unless objection is raised.) I happened to see the same event taken by two companies—the grounding of a freighter off Long Island—one with the natural sounds and shouts of the life guards and the surrounding crowd, and one with the continuous commentary of, I believe, Mr. Graham McNamee. The second explained the situation much more clearly, but the picture without the commentary had the sense of actuality and the picture with it seemed forced and unnatural.

The newsreel continues to be pictorially accurate, but the tone becomes entirely false. This would happen even if the commentary were always correct and intelligent and appropriate. Unfortunately, there seems to be a fixed rule that a bit of comedy must be added and that the speaker must show more wit than the events justify. The ancient newsreel showing the departure of the Atlantic Fleet for a war game was not particularly exciting, but it was genuine. The present newsreel of the same event, with prearranged boxing matches and practical jokes and sly digs from the voice of the screen, is not only valueless, but extremely tiresome. The serious side of this has not yet become apparent, but the possibilities of the commentator's giving a totally wrong impression of an event are very great. We have not been permitted to see many newsreels of radical riots; for myself, I would rather not see them at all than have them shown with an accompaniment of slick humor.

One picture I have already seen in which the speech completely spoiled something of emotional importance. A few months ago a passenger vessel went down in the Pacific, and by happy accident a photographer on board the receiving vessel took movies of the sinking. Up to this point the commentary, although superfluous, was not wholly evil. But the photographer took a last shot of the vessel buckling and sinking under the waves, and the gross sentimentality of the description which accompanied this almost majestic event was appalling.

Burlesque and Comedy.—On the same program with "Illicit" at the Winter Garden a few weeks ago there were two short comedies, both done with high spirits and both effectively kidding the talkies themselves—not because the mechanism is absurd, but because the subjects are absurd. Miss Helen Broderick appeared in court as a woman who had killed her husband, and the event was made ridiculous and ended with her confession that she killed her husband because he was a tune-forgetter and one day went so far as to forget the name of the "Stein Song." The other picture was a similar burlesque of the talkie-Western, with Joe Frisco as the leading player and a very ham matinée idol as the hero. Both of these pictures had speed, and the second one had considerable action which was not interrupted by too much dialogue. "Illicit," the principal picture, concerned chiefly with half a dozen outworn ideas about free love, was clogged with words, most of which were unnecessary except for the comedy part played by the excellent Charles Butterworth, who, with his dry tones, uttered absurdities of the type written five years ago by Donald Ogden Stewart. It would appear that comedy, at least, can stand being made verbal.

"My dear, she's divine."—I recall no appearance on the screen which has so overwhelmed the esthetes as that of Marlene Dietrich. In "Morocco" and "The Blue Angel" she created one of those rare double esteems, as the pictures were great popular successes and the intellectuals did not keep away, but went again and again and bought the phonograph records of the songs she sings. She is extraordinarily beautiful; she seems to have a decided personal humor which occasionally takes her out of character on the screen, but gives her character as a personality. And although a moody melancholy and a rather gay seductiveness are her chief expressions up to now, she seems to have the qualities of a fine film player. It is heresy to one group and platitude to the other to say that she has not the range and intensity of Greta Garbo, but I am afraid that most of the admirers of each care more for the person than the player. It remains, therefore, important for the player to care nothing about the person.

GILBERT SELDES.

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The Position of the Progressive

The recent articles by Edmund Wilson and George Soule ("An Appeal to Progressives," The New Republic, January 14, and "Hard-boiled Radicalism," January 21) have stimulated a number of persons not on the staff of The New Republic to comment or reply. Two such statements, by Robert Hallowell and Kenneth Burke, were published in our issue of February 4. The third and fourth of the series, by Matthew Josephson and Benjamin Ginzburg, were published in the issue of February 18.—THE EDITORS.

V: Drift or Mastery?

> Progressivism as a present political phenomenon is the composite blur of the mental disturbance of those dressed up with no place to go, and of those who do not know where they are going but are on the way. *Richard D. Ware.*

> Radicalism, if it is to be more than a series of phrases, ought to have an organized body; it has to have a constituency outside a few dissatisfied young college graduates, journalists, lawyers, engineers or economists. *George Soule.*

> Das Fürstentum, meine Herren, hat praktische Diener, nicht Schön-redner aber praktische Diener, wie sie Ihnen zu wunschen waren!
>
> Ferdinand Lassalle.

EDMUND WILSON and George Soule have, by initiating the discussion of the progressive position, rendered a significant service in a much neglected cause, that of clarity in social thinking. The stirring call to progressives, for a social and political reorientation, and the hard-headed, realistic analysis of our present socio-economic impasse may, in terms of the market place, lead us nowhere, but the discussion will undoubtedly help clear the ground, a necessary job before construction can properly be started. The participants in the discussion, let us be frank about it, may not themselves profit by the performance. Participants in nearly all discussions are inclined to fall into set mental clichés and follow their very own patterns of thought, but if induced, as I believe is the case in the present exchange of views, to speak out sincerely and fully, they will throw their fallacies into bold relief and by that result the listeners-in are certain to profit.

The central issue of the present crucial period in American history, with which the discussion is concerned, has a twofold aspect. There is, first, the personal aspect of the problem, that of relating the individual to *the* group, or *a* group, without which, in the present situation, as Mr. Wilson says, one is incapable of "finding his way in the economic labyrinth" and of acquiring "a conviction of the value of what he is doing."

Then, there is the social side of the problem, that of making the relationship between the individual and the group a serviceable instrumentality capable of achieving stated social aims. It need not appear surprising that thus far the discussion has abounded in searching of the heart rather than in attempts at formulating a workable way out. Of such is the nature of the intellectual profession, and Benjamin Ginzburg has well stated it: "our intellectual and cultural activities do not need any justification or criticism in terms of political dogmas and social policies. The only criticism of which they properly admit is in terms of their own immanent standards." Mr. Ginzburg would lead in the opposite direction from that in which Mr. Wilson wishes to travel. "American intellectuals," he says, "if they only take advantage of it, really possess more power over cultural conditions than over the political realities to which they attribute their lack of cultural accomplishments." Heretofore, "American intellectuals have been guilty of an excessive diversion of their energy into political channels." But is it true? May we inquire the names of the American intellectuals who conspicuously and unreservedly threw their energies into political channels and how many of them have done so? Or is doing publicity work for politicians, preparing speeches for corporate vice presidents and writing apologia for the system to be considered political activity? Mr. Ginzburg owes it to himself to enumerate the specific provinces of cultural living where the intellectuals' power over conditions is real: is it in the arts, in the drama, legitimate and canned, in the social sciences as taken care of by the opulent foundations, in the universities, in the daily press, that the intellectuals are free from being caught in the "economic labyrinth"?

Rational intellectualism carries Mr. Ginzburg over a disturbing reality of which eight to ten million unemployed are a part and starving men and women in the hundreds of thousands are a steady feature. "If the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted?" asks Mr. Ginzburg referring to the dreadful diversion of the intellectuals from "the proper husbanding and direction of spiritual forces," but if there is no "it" the worry of wherewith it may be salted appears to be secondary. The eight to ten million unemployed emphasize the unreality of the exalted Edelweiss attitude.

II

Mr. Wilson's call to action is predicated on the assumption that capitalism is in a state of collapse. This is entirely true if we view our epoch in historical perspective. But for purposes of immediate action we must deal with immediate facts. We must see them as the man in the street sees them, for we must reckon with his reactions to the facts of daily life. Capitalism is undeniably bankrupt in many ways. It has been deficient in payment on a good many of its promissory notes, but it is still doing business, and the chances are that it will continue doing so without violent upheavals for quite some time.

"Betting on capitalism" to use Mr. Wilson's very apt phrase, still remains a venture closer to investment than to gambling. The major developments which we now witness —the depression, unemployment, the continued large dividends on corporate investments in the midst of a flat industrial situation, the failure of the government and the unwillingness of the captains of business to do anything tangible to alleviate the sufferings of millions—all these are but signs of capitalism's coming of age. What we now have is capitalism at its worst, but not at its end. Capitalism

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no longer appears able to pay its hired hands a living wage and simultaneously assure its investors a comfortable dividend. More and more frequently the system requires blood transfusions in the form of wage reductions. In consequence, not only has labor moved from a living-standard wage down to levels of meager subsistence, but the prosperity basis of the professional and the *petit-bourgeois* classes has shifted downward also. Hence the thunder from the middle-class Olympus. In terms of social orientation this means, to use the hackneyed Communist phrase, that we are facing "an era of intense and sharpening struggles." But who is ready for the "sharpening struggles," and how are they to be met?

The liberals, as Mr. Hallowell has admirably stated the position, are not ready for a march on capitalism. They merely want a better mannered capitalism. The historic function of liberalism has always been that of a lubricant intended to minimize friction in social relations under capitalism. Nor have the progressives registered a clear-cut opposition to the social status quo. An attempt to answer the question: who or what is the progressive movement, brings forth a bewildering range of types of men, things and manners of thought, a motley variety of pet panaceas, of half-baked reform programs, of radicalized liberalism and liberalized socialism, of churchmen who have lost their gods and divines who have lost their churches, of disgruntled and restive millionaires, of return-to-the-competitive-system Senators backed by rural constituents, of good-government enthusiasts without jobs, of professional emergency-committee ladies, of publicity men with no coverage and politicians out of office, of Republicans with a grudge and Democrats unwisely born into the Roman Catholic faith. The progressive movement has been amazingly poor in positive results. What has remained of the nation-wide battles at Armageddon under Roosevelt, Bryan, Wilson, La Follette? Of the local encounters stimulated by men and women of the quality of Ben Lindsey, Jane Addams, Tom Johnson? In its citadel, in the state of Wisconsin, progressivism accounts for no more tangible progress made during the same period than what muddling New York or reactionary Massachusetts can show.

If progressivism has failed of making its mark in American reality because of lack of objective and orientation, radicalism has greatly erred on the point of overemphasizing the importance of paper-made and carefully paragraphed programs. However, the gravest tragedy of the radical movement has been its inability to keep organized the large following that it had at various times attracted. In the heyday of American Socialism, when a membership of over 100,000, a vote neighboring on a million and a considerable number of elected public officials gave the movement an appearance of reality, it was but a surface growth with no roots in the soil of the land and no lasting cohesive force.

American radicalism always had a predilection for indulgence in ethical dogmatism and abstract economics. It has worried its head over the downfall of virtue in politics and has made political democracy a cardinal point of its propaganda, being unaware that the degradation of the democratic dogma is part of our history. It has fought trusts in economics and racketeering in business, failing to observe that both are inherent in the nature of our predatory culture. In consequence radicalism has evoked no response from among the common people; it has failed to command the esteem of the economists and the scientifically trained elements of the intellectual class and has left the hearts of the mighty free of fear. It went off at a tangent from the imagination of our youth and its enthusiasm.

Under the circumstances the need of a new alliance is obvious. Of course, the vital elements of extant radicalism ought not to be overlooked. Quite on the contrary, they ought to be galvanized into purposive action. One of the conditions essential to such achievement has been suggested by Matthew Josephson: the enforcement of "moral indignation" with a systematic, coherent and dynamic evaluation of all our social facts and trends. But even more is necessary. There must be organization.

III

Every contest for vital objectives in a power-ruled society of necessity takes on the form of struggle for power. Social power is not accumulated by invocation: it is built up by an intelligently cohering collective through continuous exercise, through action, ever widening in scope and ever growing in purposive intensity, for immediate stakes and for ultimate ends. Social radicalism needs a social or class base of action. And such a base of action will be found in an effective organization of the nation's *industrial and engineering competence, labor, intelligence and fighting fiber*. An eventual alliance, a triumvirate for power to consist of the technicians or the workaday intellectuals, of labor, and of the intelligent, alert, not-yet-arrived youth, is what is dictated by the logic of events. No one of the three elements can alone harness the task.

Admittedly, betting on either violent revolution or peaceful evolution will lead us nowhere. Not betting but participating, not drift but mastery, is the issue. Mr. Wilson's statement is significant precisely because it abandons the post of the observer for the role of the interventionist. But—is this not an orientation on labor? Mr. Hallowell enters a formal protest, and surely there are many who share his view:

> A victory on the part of labor, in its present state of mind and enlightenment, would do no more to realize the promise of American life than a new victory on the part of capital. (My own view is that it should do less.) Both are shot through with the spirit of the racket and both have got to be purged by the lash of the law before we can clean up the economic battle-front, and move on toward those fronts, educational and cultural, which ought to be, and with leadership would be today, occupying our energies.

Mr. Hallowell's abiding faith in the purging force of "the lash of the law" (perhaps another Wickersham Commission?) can be easily dismissed, and his contempt for "the economic battlefront" is not convincing. But it is undeniably true that labor is conservative and that its dominant leadership is in most cases reactionary, quite often senile and in some cases directly corrupt. The technicians, moreover, are an amorphous mass, and have not thus far shown that they even faintly realize their potential significance in a functionally organized order. Youth is also for

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the time being immobile, devoid of avowed collective social standards. Can they be marshalled into action?

Such objections cannot be answered dogmatically. But it scarcely needs to be proved that the mood or the state of mind of a social group is at no time a fixed and immobile entity; and that the state of mind of a social group is likely to change more thoroughly and more rapidly, in response to stimuli from within or outside, than that of the individuals who compose the group. The conservatism of labor and its being "shot through with the spirit of the racket" is as much a part of the scene as is the corruption of the politicians, the predominance of business in education and canned thinking in the intellectual world. The "labor leader" is the shadow of the "captain of industry." The United States Chamber of Commerce and the A. F. of L. meet in the National Civic Federation. The trinity will be dissolved, however, with the dissipation of the groundless faith in "the American democratic experiment" and of the dynamically insignificant and qualitatively untrue boast that "no other industrial machine has ever done more or nearly so much for so many people." The dethronement of the industrial demigods and the banking overlords is one of the tasks of militant radicalism.

American labor has proved its fighting fiber more than once. More than once bankrupt leadership has been unceremoniously overthrown. The stormy years of 1919-1920 with over 4,000,000 workers participating in huge and spirited strikes saw numerous "outlaw walkouts." Sacco and Vanzetti, Tom Mooney and Billings, Eugene Debs and Mother Jones are milestones and symbols of what labor can be. Not all the American working men and women are drunk with the spirit of the racket. They do not even all drink booze. Millions of wage earners are not any "dumber" than other millions of Americans.

An alliance of the socially radical intellectuals, labor and youth would not need to "take Communism away from the Communists." It would quite likely endeavor to take America away from the standpatters, a prize well worth aiming at. Not "America—a mystic word," which Waldo Frank and his fellow travelers in the liberal void had set out to seek in 1919, but the very tangible United States with its splendid natural and acquired resources and its human and cultural material. J. B. S. HARDMAN.

Washington Notes

Goodbye to Congress—The Approaching Convention—Hoover and the Fourth Estate—The Secretariat—Republican Prospects

NOW THAT the Seventy-first Congress has finally and painfully expired, it seems a waste of time to review its record. It is more interesting to consider its effect upon the political future, because during the past three months the underlying motive of practically every move in Washington has been presidential politics. Everybody, including the occupant of the White House, has had the 1932 campaign uppermost in mind, and has maneuvered for position.

The net result is hardly worth talking about. On the Republican side the inevitability of Hoover's renomination has become more generally accepted, but in my opinion the chances of his reëlection have not been improved. It is true that public sentiment was largely with him in his controversy with the Senate over veteran legislation, and to a lesser extent in the quarrel over drought relief. Nevertheless, the failure of his own party to support him on the vital question of the bonus veto—and others, too—increases the difficulties of his administrative problems, enhances the prospect of higher tax rates at the very outset of the campaign and generally weakens the Republican position.

This means that when the convention meets, a lot of party leaders who helped thwart Mr. Hoover during the last three months will be forced to laud to the skies his policies and record, which will certainly smear his renomination with insincerity and hypocrisy. With the regular Republicans, including the bulk of the so-called Young Guard in the Senate, forced into this position and with the progressive Republicans dragged reluctantly along by political necessity, how Hoover's 1932 campaign can be launched with even a trace of enthusiasm is beyond me. And when the resentment of the Wet element in his party at being forced to march again under a Dry leader is also added, you have a situation which no good Republican can contemplate with any great degree of pleasure.

I do not think this situation will be very greatly improved during the eight months when Congress is absent from Washington. Mr. Hoover will, of course, be free from congressional interference during that period. Though he will be relieved of the daily attacks by hostile Senators who are able to command first-page attention, he will not be free from political harassment this summer and fall. The Democratic management, militant, hopeful and alert, has extensive radio and newspaper-publicity plans to deepen the popular impression of the failure of Hoover's administration generally and the futility of Mr. Hoover personally.

The progressives will not be idle in the interim. Norris, Borah, La Follette, Brookhart and others of the group, during the late summer and fall, will speak along lines calculated to lacerate Mr. Hoover's sensibilities and lay bare the Republican wounds. All this is to be naturally expected and is part of the normal political procedure. It would not mean very much if the administration were normally capable of meeting it—but it is not.

The administration lacks both instruments and skill. The Republican National Committee is weaker both in publicity and management than it has been in twenty years. Between now and 1932, it is generally admitted by practically every Republican leader, the Fess-Lucas "set-up" must be changed, though no one seems to know how to effect the change and whom to substitute. Moreover, there is little chance that Mr. Hoover's relations with the press will improve. At no time since his nomination in 1928 has he had the personal support of more than a handful of the "boys" who make up the "corps of correspondents." The large majority of them ardently supported the redoubtable Al during the campaign. They have rejoiced at the long run of bad luck which has attended Hoover's administration from the beginning and they have done everything possible to make it worse.

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Within the last six months one or two of the small group of correspondents who are described as Hoover's intimates have "run out" on him and one or two others have perceptibly weakened. I do not want to exaggerate the political importance to a President of the correspondents' personal attitude toward him. On the other hand, anyone who knows Washington realizes that their influence lies not so much in what they write as in their personal contact with politicians.

Mr. Hoover's unpopularity can also be ascribed to the fact that the White House secretariat is not much of an asset to him, either among politicians or representatives of the press. There is not one secretary among them who has endeared himself to either element. Perhaps the new secretary, the successor to Mr. Akerson, will improve the situation. I have not the least idea at this time whom Mr. Hoover will appoint, nor has anyone else so far as I can gather. Before this is printed he may have filled the position, or he may decide to let things run along as they are until autumn, which might be just as well.

I realize the picture I have made of Hoover's prospects is a pretty dismal one and there is, of course, a brighter side. For example, his chances will naturally improve when business does. There seem signs that a slow—a very slow—recovery has started. If by next spring the improvement is generally perceptible, if the unemployment situation has been relieved and the public becomes convinced that the depression is over and things are on the upgrade, there will be a very great difference in Mr. Hoover's prospects. Things will take on a new complexion and a measure of confidence will be restored to the Republican ranks. The convention might even be an enthusiastic one. It's the one hope—and how they do hope, how they do hope!

Washington. T. R. B.

Angels

They remember how the body of earth
Glistened with the light before the stars and sun
Defined this light; they remember the world
Floating in a water of brightness, and not one
Star in this brightness, and then a thousand, curled,
Like lilies of this water, around the flanks,
Around the dripping shoulders of this world.

They remember the changed swiftness of the world,
The body of earth fallen for a new rising;
The mud and the mist bubbling with miraculous yeasts,
The seething of a lake and the stirring of a hill,
And the fin of the lake's and the wing of the hill's devising,
And the great spring of fishes and birds and beasts.

They remember the marvels moving in a cloud of calm,
They remember the surging, and the unsurprise,
Miracle upon miracle profound
In quietness. —And then man—the man—
The gasp of birth, the trembling loud breath,
The cloud of calm lifted with the lids of the eyes,
And amazement running like fire upon the ground.

MARIE DE L. WELCH.

"Wozzeck"

"WOZZECK," the much bruited opera by Alban Berg, has been announced for production in Philadelphia under Stokowsky this month. The honor is the Quaker City's, the loss, more than New York's. The spirited work should have been taken by the Metropolitan: several interests recommend its performance at a central theater of large resources. Unfortunately, "Wozzeck" is in no way acceptable to the institution on Thirty-ninth Street. It is a living issue, socially as well as musically; and there are, alas, no live issues for the Metropolitan, musical no more than social.

The old house is supposedly committed to conservatism and the aim of filling every seat at every performance. But the classics are as little its affair as the moderns. The recent revivals of "Don Giovanni" and "The Flying Dutchman" are as dead as the productions of "Johnny Spielt Auf" and other new pieces. The acuteness of the managerial strategy is to be measured by its predilection for works of minor and archeological interests like "The Vestal" and "The Fair at Sorotchinsky." Berg's atonal opera is disagreeable to it not half so much because of its radical esthetic as because of its immense relevancy to the present day and clarification of our feeling. And still we find ourselves reconciled to the circumstance that "Wozzeck" in no way is the Opera's stuff. Too much of the age's conscience, too great a sum of poignant musical expression, are in the work to make it the fit subject for a morgue.

It represents the tragedy of the "little" man we are all so troubled by: oppressed, exploited, abandoned by the masters of the State; frozen not half so much by "penury" as by inhuman treatment. The action portrays the catastrophe of a poor soldier in a provincial German garrison during times of peace. Wozzeck, the agonist, is fantastic and almost delusional of nature; and military servitude and the brutality of his life ruin the feeble, gentle spirit. He is hatefully ground under and derided by superiors and comrades. The military doctor, a scoundrel, performs medical experiments on him. The poor girl who has borne him a child is taken from him by a magnificent brute of a drum major "with a chest like a bull and a beard like a lion"; and Wozzeck stabs her in despair and drowns himself in a pond. Yet the fate he illustrates is anything but special and inapplicable. The distraction and derangement of Wozzeck are common effects of hard and sadistic surroundings on certain susceptible types. The relation of the crude action to the facts of poverty and of human savagery and stupidity generalizes it into a symbol of the experience of the under dog: by extension, the fine as well as the defenseless being distraught by the pressure of a cruel environment.

This somber picture of man robbed of the little life he owns is the poetry of two men, the dramatist Georg Büchner and the composer Alban Berg, most gifted of Schoenberg's many talented pupils. Büchner's episodic drama is anything but pedestrian and illustrative realism. Social passion, rage and pity were transmuted and materialized and essentialized in this revolutionary's imagination. Wozzeck himself is a genuine dramatic invention, a character; and the major, the doctor and the drum major are superior

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tragi-comical grotesques. The fifteen short scenes of the mordant play form an Exposition, a Crisis and a Catastrophe: their compression, their telegraphic brevity of style, above all, their subtle, indirect exhibition of secret and semiconscious motives, point simultaneously to Shake speare and twentieth-century expressionism. Büchner was actually in advance of his epoch: he lived during the first half of the last century; and his work had to wait the valuation of a time as appreciative and emulative of the Shakespearean method as is our own.

Berg's part is equally dramatic, surpassed in eminent *theatricality* by few operatic scores produced since "Pelléas." Not lyric drama in the Wagnerian tradition; far less formless and dependent on the stage than Wagner's relatively structureless music, it none the less accentuates the stage business and illuminates the inner action. But two or three leading motives are introduced. The tonal substance is integrated in the framework of forms drawn from absolute music: suites, passacaglias, themes with variations, fugues, sonata forms, etc. Still, the composer never sacrifices emotion and dramatic interest to the traditional musical organisms fitted to his little scenes. His score remains sensitively, pointedly responsive to the developments of the tragedy. Modifications of a psychographical effectiveness are continuous. The dragging music accompanying the deep depression into which the laden Wozzeck is thrown by the voices of nature at twilight is capitally representative. So, too, the stuttering rhythm to which the horrified tavern guests awaken to the bloodstains on the deranged man's hands; and the sibilant chromatic harmonies in sevenths that follow the suicide in the stilly pond; and many other equally eloquent passages.

The very applications of the absolute musical forms have dramatic relevancy. The fixed idea of the doctor who tortures Wozzeck with his mad experiments, is bitingly associated with a *passacaglia*. Wozzeck's conversation with the major, representative of Church and State, takes place to certain old dance patterns, gavotte, gigue and sarabande. A binary form underpins the first difference of the soldier and his girl. A reiterated low B-flat, an organ point, accompanies the mounting obsession of the murderous impulse. The innocent *"perpetuum mobile"* of the unsuspecting child at play in the final scene, points the tragedy.

The fruit of intelligence, discretion and feeling is visible on every page of the solid score, to a degree amply compensatory for some fairly secondary passages. While a deal of Berg's music is on the level of Büchner's inspiration, and of a sobriety and a penetration at least as intense as his, certain sections of it serve merely through their witness of a comprehension of the dramatist's intention. This is not in the least to say that the score of "Wozzeck" is not a success. As a whole, it is amply representative of one of the notable contemporary Europeans, a scholar of Schoenberg's quite worthy of comparison with his forceful teacher. All of Berg's works, this opera no less than the string quartet and the chamber symphony, introduce us to expressions of a great sensibility, an exalted lyricism and fire held in noble rein: the possible effect of Viennese elegance on Germanic fervor. Strengthened by much of the master's prodigious technique, it seems refreshingly free from pedantry. One is tempted to call Berg's temperament simpler than Schoenberg's, more sensuous and romantic; and also less powerful, never entirely quit of a certain over-refinement. Berg's inspiration certainly is even less thorough than Schoenberg's, occasionally lapsing into mediocrity.

In "Wozzeck," for example, one sometimes hears echoes of "The Ring." What is worse is the repetition of Strauss and even Puccini: the great orchestral epilogue recapitulating the thematic material of the opera making obeisance to these brothers. As for the *divertissements,* the march, waltz and tavern chorus, they are merely competent. Still these pages are venial sins: not really blemishing. They sound very rich, are extremely apposite and merge perfectly with a score replete with lovely music. "Wozzeck" is ultimately the *passacaglia,* the variations, indeed most of the scenes and interludes; and, as such, one of the achievements of contemporary music; one of the works revealing to a world "the burden of its mind." PAUL ROSENFELD.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Position of the Progressive

SIR: The New Republic of January 14 contains an article by Edmund Wilson and a number of comments by the editors which may be classed as "stimulating." . . . The "economic chaos," as you phrase it, is baffling the best minds of every party. The meaning of the changes in the economic structure which have been hastened by the events of the past ten years is slow to develop and the actuating proximate cause, which I assume to be the outgrowth of the expedient known as hand-to-mouth buying, is to be operative for some time to come. High-speed processing and quick transportation seem to favor continuance of short-supply budgets. Meantime each of us is thinking in terms of his own problem, no matter what urgency may be given to the appeal for a larger outlook. It is human nature and not "capitalism" which is doing the dictating. . . .

Mr. Edmund Wilson is given much space in which to discuss an amorphous outline spiced with "nine million men out of work" and "our industry is shifting to the South." Where did he get his fact regarding the nine million? When did our industry shift to the South? Doubtless he referred to a portion of the textile industry. Why does he not say so? What makes him think that the conditions in that portion of textiles is as he suggests? . . .

Communism is the ready answer to many questions. Like the distant hills which are greenest, it promises much in the flow of the pen of a facile writer. It must be appraised in the light of all the human factors involved. It has yet to be tried, Russia to the contrary notwithstanding. Over there the present scheme is based upon the starving of the local income in order to promote an ideal. I sometimes doubt the merit of that ideal and wonder whether it is not resulting in exploitation of the people to further the interests of a directing few, and I hope that I am mistaken.

Has it seemed to you that you cannot remove, within the span of one generation, the element of greed from humans?

Rutherford, N. J. MASON BARLOW.

SIR: Allow me to congratulate Edmund Wilson upon the stand he has taken in his "Appeal to Progressives" in The New Republic for January 14. There can hardly be any question about the futility of liberalism as a power in our political life today. The fact that an outstanding personality like the elder La Follette could rally several million presumably liberal votes should not blind us to this situation. It should, on the contrary, make it clear to us how utterly undependable this vote is, how utterly unable it is to rally consistently around a set of principles. If there is any comfort and guidance to be derived from this vote, it is that there seems to be in this country a fairly numerous body of people capable of enthusiasm for a fighter. If there is any one quality

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progressives must not lack in order to have any chance at all, they must have courage, and an indomitable courage at that. As Mr. Wilson says in his article, one can at the present time find enthusiasm in the most unexpected quarters for the heroic experiment of Russia, but one finds precious little enthusiasm for the old aunt—our constitutional rights.

If the progressives come out with a courageous proposal to make over our industrial machine here and now to serve all the people all the time, they may well find a following. If we are to confine ourselves to more or less highbrow academical criticism, we amount to little more than a coterie of intellectual conversationalists. When you talk about taking over Communism from the Communists, that is a courageous thing, for it still requires some courage to be a Communist in this country. To be merely an evolutionary Socialist—a parlor pink—that is almost worse than just being a progressive. . . .

However, when all is said, I wonder whether there is not as much social idealism within the American church as there is outside of it. I think it would be a grave mistake so to formulate our social creed that men willing to stand up for their fellow men out of religious convictions should be prevented from joining our ranks. I am deeply religious myself.

With certain reservations . . . I think that we should stand up and demand the socialization, without delay, of all fundamental industries, in order that the individual may be supplied at all times, effectively and with the greatest social aid possible, with all the things he needs to live a rich and effective human life.

Columbus, Ohio. N. C. CADODAL.

Study Tour of Europe

SIR: The opportunity for a pleasant assimilation of old facts and new vision relative to community development is promised for the summer of 1931 by means of the tour arranged by the housing section of the City Affairs Committee of New York in coöperation with the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association of Great Britain.

Mr. A. T. Pike, the secretary of the latter organization, will lead a group of citizens of New York and its environs through England, Scotland, Holland, Germany, Switzerland and France. Policies and programs will be studied; public administration as it concerns city and regional planning, health, all types of housing, recreational space and facilities and public welfare generally.

There are no prerequisites for membership in this expedition other than an interest in city affairs and the ability to invest from eight to nine hundred dollars in a constructive holiday.

Further information may be obtained regarding details of the trip by writing me at 433 West Twenty-first Street.

New York City. HELEN ALFRED.

'Tis Rotten Bunk

SIR: A contributor to The New Republic of February 4 writes that he does not think that Mr. Hoover's Dry declaration against revision was wholly dictated by principle, or that it presents his actual views with complete candor.

If the writer of that renomination article possessed one infinitesimal part of the principle and moral courage of the President of these United States he would have signed his accusation, which presents not a single proof, with his full name instead of hiding behind three initials. By the way, does not T. R. B. stand for "'Tis rotten bunk?"

This same writer also declared that the country is growing Wetter and Wetter. What he meant to say was that the Wets are finding it necessary to "holler" louder and louder. I challenge T. R. B. and every other advocate of rotten bunk in politics to demand another vote upon the Eighteenth Amendment by the people. The results of that vote of the "still small voice" of the backbone of our great nation will astound not only T. R. B. and the rest of the fellows that are being held by the nose by the profiteer and the political boss, but the editors of the Wet sheets as well. So Dry that the parched throats of the guzzler will fairly crack.

Black Hills, S. D. L. F. ELLIOTT.

Professor Palmer's Birthday

SIR: March 19 is the birthday of George Herbert Palmer. On that day he will have attained the goodly age of eighty-nine. There is no figure in American academic life to whom more people have turned in affection and gratitude. Although he belongs in a peculiar sense to Harvard and to the generations of students to whom he has taught philosophy, his influence has gone far beyond his own university. Such has been his skill in suggesting the right man for the right position that there is hardly a leading college or a university in the country which has not profited by his counsel. Moreover, it is interesting to remember that he is the author of two academic procedures now widely accepted—the practice of rotating the chairmanship of departments and the invaluable plan of the sabbatical year.

But Professor Palmer's career has not been narrowly academic. His translation of the "Odyssey," which must be regarded as one of the great contributions to popular acquaintance with classical literature, has brought him many friends. A wide and extremely varied circle of readers will always be grateful to him for his understanding life of Alice Freeman Palmer. And poetry lovers are greatly in his debt for his distinguished work on George Herbert as well as for his edition of Mrs. Palmer's poems.

But to my mind, the greatest of Professor Palmer's achievements has been the building of a practical way of life, almost unique in its richness and beauty. His is a truly cultivated spirit, finely disciplined, nourished by great books and human associations, translating into daily activities and relationships a noble and far-sighted philosophy. Out of that philosophy has come the wisdom, vigor and originality with which he has dealt with his life, so that events have seemed to conform to him, rather than he to events. In his presence one becomes aware of new meanings, subtle relations, a hidden grace beneath the surface of things. He wrote of Alice Freeman Palmer what is also preëminently true of himself, that she had the "magical art of transmuting our usual and necessary experiences into occasions of wonder, romance and gladness." So generously has Professor Palmer shared this art that many of his friends, like myself, must often have asked, "What would life have been, with Professor Palmer left out?"

Madison, Wis. HELEN EVERETT.

Mr. Drinkwater's "Pepys"

SIR: Now, seriously, and it is a serious book, I do not think that that slap-dash review of Drinkwater's "Pepys" in your issue of January 28 is quite fair or even thoughtful.

To one who has read a few of the biographies of Pepys and who comes to this book with an average fund of information, gleaned mostly from the "Diary" itself, this book by Drinkwater is most informative and contains data that can only be learned by reading many books on the same subject. Also, it almost always goes to original sources for information. The very fact that Mr. Drinkwater had access to many original manuscripts, gives the book a greater value. It is to be studied, not sentimentalized over, and used as a reference book.

To one who likes to read biography and still be spared being told what the author thinks was in the mind of his subject (which guess is no better than mine, and bores me, and wastes my time, and annoys me and distracts from the value of the book), and who is really interested in Pepys, his life and character, I say that much more will be found of interest and value in this book than your review leads one to believe.

Los Angeles, Calif. THÉRÈSE S. TUTTLE.

A Loan to Russia

SIR: Anent Mr. Miles M. Sherover's article, "An American Loan to Russia?" I will say that among people of this country there are those who have been unafraid to make loans to Russia—despite attempts at official discouragement. And, moreover, Russia has paid as she promised on all these obligations. Anyone favorably inclined to a loan to Russia can get all necessary information by writing to the State Bank of the U. S. S. R., Moscow, Soviet Republic.

Portland, Oregon. CHARLES E. KAY.

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Wanted: A Social Policy

Methods in Social Science, edited by Stuart A. Rice. University of Chicago Press. 822 pages. $4.50.

"ESPECIALLY in psychology and the social sciences," John Dewey said in 1926, "an amount of effort is putting forth in America which is hardly equaled in the rest of the world. He would be a shameless braggart who claimed that the result is as yet adequate to the activity. What is the matter? It lies, I think, with our lack of imagination in generating leading ideas. Because we are afraid of speculative ideas we do, and do over and over again, an immense amount of dead specialized work in the region of 'facts.' We forget that facts are only data; that is, are only fragmentary, uncompleted meanings." This judgment, spoken before the Sixth International Congress of Philosophy, sums up the present feeling of dissatisfaction and doubt, which has succeeded the earlier attitude of unbridled enthusiasm and faith with regard to the social sciences.

Academically this feeling of doubt has given rise to perennial discussions of methodology. What methods shall the social sciences pursue if they are to fulfill the twin hopes of theoretical predictability and practical utility? The present work is an outcome of such questionings. It represents the coöperative effort of the seven associations of professors engaged in social-science fields to crystallize "more severely scientific methods" in their sciences. In form it is a case book, comprising some fifty-odd studies, each analyzing one or more particular contributions to social science for their methodological significance. The professed aim is thus to give a picture of the methods actually in use in the best social-science work rather than to speculate on methods from a philosophic standpoint.

The book is highly disappointing when judged in terms of the underlying discontent with the state of the social sciences. One does not expect the millennium, but one has a right to look forward to some illumination of the perspective of the social sciences. Are the hopes which have been entertained for these disciplines really justified, or are they the product of a romantic illusion? These questions receive no answer. Indeed, the very method by which the book is organized precludes any answer in terms of general principles. Professor Morris R. Cohen has contended that the case method grew up in the American law schools because the professors did not know their law, and hence found it easier to teach cases than to expound general principles. The explanation is plausible, and it helps us understand why the case method has recently spread like wildfire among sociologists harassed by their inability to formulate principles and laws of social phenomena.

Essentially the virtue of the book is that it offers a relatively compact documentary summary of the present state of social-science thinking. The record is incomplete, as the editor himself admits. It is easy to see that there has been a great inclination to favor the work of Americans, an inclination perhaps justified on the theory that the United States is the cradle of "objective methods" in social science. Some of the inclusions and omissions are hard to justify on any theory, and perhaps must be explained on the basis of a physical composition of forces among the editor's preferences, the recommendations of various societies, the availability or unavailability of competent analysis, etc. Thus, there is an article on "Spiritual Values in the Work of Ernst Troeltsch," a German historian of the social doctrines of the Christian churches, but there is no mention of the far more important work of Max Weber. In the field of psychology there are a number of articles dealing with the older type of experimental psychology, but there is no discussion of the work of Pavlov (or of Watson), and only an indirect reference to the psychoanalytic schools, by means of an article on Malinowsky. The list of such criticisms could be lengthened in all directions, but, since a coöperative work is bound to be more or less vulnerable, it would be unfair to press them.

Although the book does not attempt to formulate an impression of the whole, no intelligent reader can go through it without forming one for himself. To the reviewer, this general impression of the social sciences is that the best work is done in precisely those fields where the least attempt is made to force phenomena into the procrustean bed of "scientific" determinism. The most interesting articles in the present volume are those dealing with history and cultural anthropology, fields in which the term science is almost equivalent to simple sound scholarship. On the other hand, the most deadly articles are those in general sociology, where the will for deterministic science has always outrun the capacity of the facts to arrange themselves in scientific form.

These indications are significant in view of the history of the social-science movement. That movement has had for its theoretical aim the application to social phenomena of the methods and ideas of the physical sciences. In its practical phase it has preached the gospel of first finding out the laws of social phenomena and then applying that knowledge for social reform. The program was seductive from both points of view, but the fallacies involved in it soon became apparent. Thus, the approach to social phenomena with the bias of a mechanical determinism made social reform the function of a dictator-engineer working from the outside—a point of view which is well illustrated in the outlook of Auguste Comte and even in the current worship of the expert in America. Sometimes, as in the case of classical economics, even the dictator-engineer was excluded, and society was left to contemplate the necessary workings of economic laws.

The truth of the matter is that in human phenomena the fact-finding and deterministic approach is not the only valid one. There is also the ethical approach, involving the framing of policies and ideals which must be carried on concurrently with the factual outlook. Indeed, it is because both points of view are here equally relevant that it is not possible to erect a determinism with the same degree of cogency as in physical science. It is obvious that man, being a rational animal, looks forward to changing the conditions of his existence, and it is also obvious that, on account of the same situation, the play of economic forces, for example, is continually being altered so as to make accurate and detailed prediction impossible.

The consequence of this duality of approach is not at all to render social science useless for practical purposes, but to make the very imperfection of social science the condition of its utility. If economic science, for example, were completely certain in its predictions, it would be useless for practical reform. But instead of recognizing this fact, and instead of encouraging the crystallization and clarification of social policies simultaneously with factual scientific research, the leaders of the social-science movement have said in effect, "Wait until our science is complete before you do anything else."

As far as the leaders are concerned, the attitude is no doubt the result of an intellectual confusion caused by the overweening prestige of the physical sciences. But when

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one considers the tremendous endowments that have been put at the disposal of social science, particularly in America, one begins to wonder whether in the case of the foundations there is not more at work than an intellectual blindness. One begins to wonder whether there is not also present a motive of social conservatism, a motive which uses social science as a sort of Penelope's web to put off the demands of the suitors for social reform. From this point of view it does not matter much whether the social science is intellectually good or bad, so long as it puts off curiosity about social policies. It is thus quite fitting that American sociology should be more heavily endowed than that of any other country, and should at the same time be intellectually of the lowest caliber.

If American social science is really looking for a clue as to what is wrong with social-science methods, it might begin by pondering the reasons behind the foundations' policy of providing millions for research and not one cent for philosophy. It might then realize how its policy of trying to force social facts into an ultra-scientific mold is being exploited for the benefit of vested social interests. This in turn would help to uncover the intellectual unsoundness of that position and would lead to a healthy deflation of the social-science movement. Factual research in the social sciences would then become less pretentious, but at the same time more honest and significant.

BENJAMIN GINZBURG.

Prohibition Blues

The Dry Decade, by Charles Merz. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 343 pages. $3.

THIS IS journalism of a distinguished order. It should ride high on the wave of public disgust which has followed the publication of the lamentable Wickersham report and the political squirmings with which our fact-faking President accompanied it. Why was not Mr. Merz appointed to the Commission, and supported, say, by an able historian such as Robert C. Binkley, author of "Responsible Drinking," by a distinguished sociologist such as Robert Lynd, and, merely for dignity's sake, by some representative of the legal profession? They could have done the job in a quarter of the time and for a tenth of the price, merely by assembling data already in hand. Why, so far as effective participation in the processes of government is concerned, are our uniquely qualified social scientists among the permanently unemployed? But then, why is a politician?

Mr. Merz supplies implicit answers to all of these questions, although the reader will have to dig them out for himself. His book is a careful, objective, factual record, interpretation being confined to an occasional weighing of the evidence, which Mr. Merz does with admirable precision and impartiality. This, however, will not deter the Drys from denouncing it. They will assert, and with some reason, that whereas the Wickersham report was merely Wet enough to drown a catfish, "The Dry Decade" is Wet enough to drown a school of porpoises.

Mr. Merz's text and appendices make the following points substantially clear:

That the active Drys are and always have been a minority in this country. Twenty-six states had adopted prohibition laws before the War, but these laws were enacted by a vote of less than 4 percent of the adult population.

That the statistics of liquor consumption show no conclusive correlation with the successive waves of the prohibition movement. The annual per-capita consumption of distilled spirits dropped from 2.24 gallons in 1850 to 1.43 gallons in 1910. But during this same period the per-capita consumption of wine more than doubled and the consumption of beer increased by more than a thousand percent, the total consumption of all liquors reaching a high point of 22.8 gallons per capita in the year 1913, when the Anti-Saloon League was asserting that "two-thirds of the territory of the country is now Dry."

That a year after the passage of the Volstead Act the inadequacy of the enforcement machinery was apparent; that in later years the actual practice of enforcement degenerated into heavily publicized, face-saving raids and padlocks, while the totals of illicit liquor production and smuggling, of drunkenness and of crime, steadily mounted.

That no President has ever recommended, and no Congress has ever passed, adequate appropriations for enforcement—"adequate" being estimated by Commissioner Doran at $300,000,000 annually, as against the 1930 maximum of $13,000,000; further, that the Dry forces have not dared to demand adequate appropriations for enforcement, either in Congress or in the state legislatures.

That the attempt to pass the buck to the states has consistently failed; in the eighth year of prohibition the total amount appropriated by all the states for enforcement was less than three-quarters of a million dollars.

That faced with opportunities to collect as much as a million dollars a month in bribes, the staff of the Prohibition Bureau has averaged only about 8-percent dishonest.

That the "Bargain Day" method of relieving courts congested with prohibition cases (small fines as an inducement to pleas of guilty) had, by 1925, established the equivalent of a new liquor-license system—which, however, netted the government much less than the old one.

For the student of contemporary politics, "The Dry Decade" provides a fascinating and instructive text. In fact, few books in recent years have documented so thoroughly the breakdown of our political system.

JAMES RORTY.

To Be a Pilgrim

The Passionate Pilgrim, a Life of Annie Besant, by Gertrude Marvin Williams. New York: Coward-McCann. 382 pages. $3.50.

I SUPPOSE if you read "Pilgrim's Progress" at an impressionable age (and who reads it at any other?) you will never thereafter quite shake off the feeling of being on a pilgrimage. It is a feeling, however, which is so common and can become so comfortable that you soon stop worrying your head about it, as long as your accommodations suit and your traveling companions are fairly agreeable. Certainly not many of us could properly be called passionate pilgrims. An increasing minority seem to feel that we are all on the wrong road or on a road which leads nowhere, but they content themselves either with disseminating their skepticism, with shaking their heads and sighing, or with eating, drinking and making merry noises. Zealots are scarce.

It would be interesting to know the truth about Annie Besant. To say this is not to imply that Miss Williams has either suppressed or garbled the facts of Mrs. Besant's life. So far as I know, the facts are all there, and in their right

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order; it must have been a big job to get them all together. But "The Passionate Pilgrim" remains a book without glamor, on a subject you feel should be fascinating. The author does not regard Mrs. Besant as an uproarious figure of fun—far from it—but she evidently takes no stock in zealots. Why, then, did she bother to write the book?

Annie Besant, you may be surprised to learn, was beautiful in her younger days. She also had a mind of her own: an unbecoming ornament for a Victorian young lady. When she married, at twenty, the Reverend Frank Besant, his smug orthodoxy was the last straw needed to break the back of her faith. She left him, and went up to London, where she soon fell under the spell of Charles Bradlaugh, the militant atheist. As his sub-editor, canvasser and assistant in countless ways she kept herself busy for ten years, and made a name for herself as a writer and speaker. But a militant atheist, even in those days, must have been a little like a man beating the air; eventually Annie Besant realized that Freethought was not the most vital issue in the world. The Fabian Society welcomed her, and for a while she was a socialist. Then one day in 1889 her friend W. T. Stead gave her a book to review for him. It was Mme. Blavatsky's "Secret Doctrine." She was fascinated, went to meet the author, and was soon "H. P. B.'s" prize disciple.

For forty years Annie Besant has been a Theosophist; for the last twenty-four, president of the Theosophical Society. As the Society's headquarters are at Adyar, in India, much of her life has been spent there, and she has become almost a Hindu by adoption. An outspoken champion of Indian nationalism, she was interned by the British government, and on her release elected president of the Indian Nationalist Congress. In the Society itself she has had a stormy time of it. Religious organizations are notoriously fertile fields for the most unprincipled kind of politics, and the Theosophical Society has had its share of scandals and schisms.

Now Annie Besant is eighty-four, and her pilgrimage is nearly over. Does she see the turrets of the City, or does she still hope to see them? As Miss Williams takes leave of her, at a jubilee meeting in London, Annie Besant is just an old woman, worn with struggle, whose eyes fill with tears at the plaudits of her followers. "It would have been much easier for me," she whispered, "if it had been a hostile crowd." Is this the end of a passionate pilgrimage? Is that all? T. S. MATTHEWS.

An Empire of the Future

The Giant of the Western World, by Francis Miller and Helen Hill. New York: William Morrow and Company. 308 pages. $3.

ALTHOUGH I do not agree altogether with the thesis underlying this book, it is in certain respects the most important discussion of the present relations between the United States and Europe that has yet appeared. The authors advance the theory that after having achieved an "amazing degree of continental unification," the United States has now started upon a unique invasion of the world, and that this invasion will result in the establishment of what they call a North Atlantic civilization.

Three groups of Americans have invaded Europe. The first consists of the business men who treat Europe simply as an additional market. The second is composed of our 300,000 tourists, most of whom go forth in search of "culture." But our tourists venture forth with less confidence than our business men. The American attitude toward Europe has been one of "cultural inferiority," but of "administrative contempt." Finally, there are the American "coöperators" who regard Europe as a mission field. Such Americans have given the initial impetus to three international religious organizations, to European relief work and to various peace societies.

This outflow is having a profound effect upon American life; it is also stirring Europe to the marrow. The refusal of the United States to accept the political obligations which should have followed from its new economic position has delayed European reconstruction. "There is scarcely an economic or financial issue confronting the governments of western and central Europe in which the United States does not at some point have a vital interest. . . . It may appear under the form of conditions for the reorganization of its finances which a European government is required to fulfill before it can secure a loan from Wall Street; it may be a revision of a state's taxation policy in order to pay its war debts to the United States; or it may be tariff adjustments made necessary by the too successful competition in a European market of a manufacturer from Pennsylvania or Ohio." American financial power in Europe has strengthened the hand of tyrants, as in Italy and Poland; it has aroused the fear of nationalists.

The influence of America is also modifying the economic and social structure of Europe. Since 1925, practically every German engineer of importance has come to this country to make a study of our methods. Three hundred thousand copies of Ford's "My Life and Work" have been sold in Germany. Europeans are beginning to copy our department stores and to adopt our systems of scientific management and accounting. From the wider social standpoint, the American movies (which subtly advertise American goods), American cocktails, Judge Lindsey's "Companionate Marriage," which has sold 37,000 copies in Germany, American libraries, American Christian Science, all are having a corroding effect.

The Americanization of Europe, the authors contend, is changing the face of two countries. As a result, a new type of society is emerging which possesses so many traits in common as to form a single North Atlantic civilization. The unity of this civilization is economic; it is based upon a common system of production and distribution. The flow of machine-made goods will bind the world of the North Atlantic, just as the Roman legions bound together that of the Mediterranean. "A primarily non-national way of looking at business and exchange is becoming the accepted way of the industrial and financial worlds."

When they set forth this thesis, the authors attempt to prove too much. There is little prospect that a North Atlantic civilization will come into existence until the great powers abandon their policy of economic nationalism. In the last chapter, Mr. Miller and Miss Hill point out the dangers of this policy as far as the United States is concerned. But earlier they seem to assume that impersonal economic forces are automatically bringing about closer political coöperation between nations and are gradually calling this common civilization into existence. There is little evidence to support this thesis. Tariffs are going higher and higher, not only in the United States but elsewhere. Some industrialists and bankers in this country may be moving toward lower duties, but our politicians and big business men have preached protectionism so long that our farmers and laborers, now frightened by Russian dumping and the fear of cheap "foreign labor," have picked

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up the protectionist standard which the large industrialists have laid down. As long as economic nationalism dominates foreign policy, the expansion of trade, far from creating a bond of interest, will simply cause new international controversies. There is no hope for a North Atlantic civilization—there is no hope for world peace—until nations abandon their present policies of economic aggression for a policy of economic give and take.

RAYMOND LESLIE BUELL.

The Puritan Tradition

The Puritan Mind, by Herbert Wallace Schneider. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 301 pages. $4.

THE MOST positive indigenous tradition we have to contemplate in America is the Puritan tradition. It was never a pure, newly sprung tradition even in its early glory; for European religious and political problems bulked too large in its inheritance. In the later and middle periods what uniqueness it had acquired on American soil was lost through contact with business growth and the pioneer tradition. To speak of the pioneer tradition is, of course, to speak an inaccuracy: the pioneer mode of life was an inarticulated, non-critical, forced habit. The relics left us by the pioneer—the tall tales, the hearty vocabulary, the elaborately rude manners—were by-products; they expressed merely; they did not solidify. The other intangible results—the supposed individualism, the derring-do—have had their positive effects on the legal, even the economic, history of this country. But there is only a vague trace of them in our actualized intellectual history. If the pioneer had vanished instead of settling, we should no more consider him a portion of our history, apart from ordinary detail, than we do the Indian. The same would never have been true of the Puritan tradition.

When that tradition congealed, there remained an enormous literature. And when the tradition was alive, the literature of Puritanism was the soul of its ecclesiastical body and the blood of its political veins. As literature, it was primely critical; it was, almost painfully, intellectual and self-conscious. Even the Puritan novelist, Nathaniel Hawthorne, whom Mr. Schneider in his excellent study considers under the head of "Ungodly Puritans," was a critical novelist. His best novels do not stand as monuments which can be considered apart from the age, as the more magnificent literatures of other countries can be considered apart from the ages they only occasionally commemorate; his novels are instead the specific explication of a rigorous mental and emotional attitude toward life, of a hierarchical positive tradition.

It is to Mr. Schneider's credit that he makes clear Benjamin Franklin's position in relation to Puritanism. Perhaps he oversimplifies the urbane utilitarian; but at least he shows that Franklin was not simply a copy-book moralist, and that his code of ethics, though profoundly shifting the emphasis, is at once a direct criticism and a reëstablishment of the Puritan ethic. Franklin is open to the accusation that he justified the virtues and morals of the market place. But the market place was full of Puritans and had been for some time. The Puritan dedication of his soul to God and of his mind and body to the counting house may seem to us a contradiction. This, however, is a romanticizing of our free-thinking and of our failure to understand the deep-reaching theological sense of history which informed his life.

For, first of all, a religion is a theory of history. It may be as erroneous as any other. All the controversies, political and ecclesiastic, that are so well and so thoroughly related in Mr. Schneider's study were interpretations for the Puritans not of mere dogmas, but of man's actual concrete history and function in this world, in Boston, in South Hadley. If their historical conception had not been so vigorous, the Great Awakening would never have taken place; sin and damnation were as much a part of history as the discovery of America. These matters seem remote from us only because religion is no longer, whatever else it may be, an inclusive, valid theory of history.

For a mind like Jonathan Edwards', religion was the warp and woof of all events. His emphasis upon damnation was not the emphasis of the present raving evangelist; it was the emphasis a statesman might give to an imminent national catastrophe. His intellect dealt with pressing events; and his preoccupation was no more strange than that of St. Jerome or Nicholas of Cusa. They happened to be greater men and lived in an atmosphere which was not so completely preoccupied with them as New England was with Edward's attention to it.

Edwards was no mental dwarf. He read Locke and, without reading Berkeley, derived Berkeley's conclusions from Locke's premises. He reversed Plato's notion and discovered that "Space is God." He wrote, in his later years, a treatise on the Beautiful which, in its firm neo-Platonic strain, demonstrates incidentally that Puritanism was more rigorous, more pervasive as a doctrine than Plotinus', only because the atmosphere into which it was projected was thinner, more select, and soaked up Puritanism's color more readily. It was a thin time in a way, and monotonous; it congealed the more quickly because of this.

If events had been such that the pioneer activity and business had not eventually sapped and drained the energy of Puritanism and emphasized another course of history, the tradition might have gone on developing; and so admirably planned a book as Mr. Schneider's could not have been written. What he has demonstrated, in his readable, sometimes witty and always impartial account of the intellectual times of the Puritans, is that their critical intensity laid the first foundations of intellectual life in this country.

KENNETH WHITE.

Robin Hood in Zion

Two Thieves, by Manuel Komroff. New York: Coward-McCann. $2.50.

HERE IS a story that might well be told across a table in a restaurant. The restaurant should be of the New York-Italian variety, with a half-empty bottle of red wine and a few slightly insane artificial flowers in a violent pink and blue vase standing before us on the table. We should then be ready to believe almost anything, especially if the story-teller had an elegant air of self-depreciation and an inflection of the voice that allowed his engaging use of the New York vernacular to flow at ease over and around glittering oriental images—gay silver elephants dancing in the sun, mountains of green and red silks, ivory minarets against hard blue skies.

In Manuel Komroff's latest novel there is no symbolism such as may be found in "Coronet" and suggested in "Juggler's Kiss." There are touches of gentle irony playing over the surfaces of the plot, but the story is stripped for action and leaps forward with the speed of a rapid-fire motion-picture camera. The scene is Palestine in the time of Pilate, Procurator of Judea. The story avoids all men-

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tion of Christ, but selects two anonymous characters from the familiar legend, the two thieves crucified at Golgotha with Christ between them. Mr. Komroff gives them names: Rongus, the gigantic young Jewish slave, and Bazor the Arab. Once they are in motion, nothing can stop them; for no one, particularly if he is a Roman, can match wits with Bazor; and Rongus, with a heart as pure as Sir Galahad's, has the strength of ten Roman generals hell-bent for election in four-horse-power chariots. Speaking of chariots, here are real chariot races, none of the milk-and-water sort to be found in "Ben Hur," but glorious affairs, such as are seen on the circus posters that announce the arrival in Kokomo of "The Greatest Show on Earth." Rivaling the races are beautiful white Greek slave girls, hand-picked from Ziegfeld's "Follies"; and there is Pilate himself, all dressed up in the temperament of a Byzantine prince and bossed by a female Babylonian clown called Buncha. The part of a low-comedy villain is played by Sulla, a Roman captain. All these are brought together by the adventurous progress of Rongus and Bazor, who are motivated into and out of crime by a passion for Zionism equaled only by the later activities of Ludwig Lewisohn.

Few romances written within the last few years have the faultless pace and narrative brilliance of this novel by Manuel Komroff. It is well not to be fooled by the author's recklessly easy, self-depreciatory manner. He knows the limitations of the light romantic novel; his business is to make the story move at top speed. Picturesque episodes are thrown into the narrative with the headlong skill of a Hollywood movie director with two million dollars to spend. The plot moves so quickly that the main stream of action is forgotten in the excitement of each successive encounter of the two thieves and their Roman enemies.

The book is closed and again the restaurant takes shape about us. The melodious voice comes to a full stop. The crazy artificial flowers are fading in the impossible pink and blue vase.

HORACE GREGORY.

Book Notes

BELLES LETTRES

IN DEFENSE OF SENSUALITY, by John Cowper Powys. *New York: Simon and Schuster. 313 pages. $3.*

In rhapsodic and elaborated prose, the author of "Wolf Solent" describes "the bare, stark, stoically stripped Life-sensation," involving himself, first of all, in a somewhat jejune account of solipsism. In its bulk and pretensions the volume is a defense of loneliness, subjectivism, love, sympathy, ecstasy, passion, for "it is necessary to love Life—or at least to wrestle with it and wring out of it that delicious happiness to which we have a right"—to renounce the life of action and to escape "the gregarious warmth of the crowd."

SEVEN TYPES OF AMBIGUITY, by William Empson. *New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 325 pages. $3.*

Empson's approach is psychological; he derives from I. A. Richards. Such analytical criticism is stimulating but difficult reading: the results of Mr. Empson's analyses are abstractly stated, and his points become clear largely by his use of numerous illustrations. He defines and grades seven types of ambiguity in poetic language; he differentiates these types according to the mental processes which cause them. The results of such dissection are a clearer idea of the effects, often unpremeditated, of language, syntax, grammatical structure, and a consequent understanding of difficulties in poetry. Mr. Empson's most brilliant chapters deal with those ambiguities employed by the nineteenth-century Romantics—now the point of attack for most critics—and the reasons for this type of poetic vagueness.

BIOGRAPHY

THE LIFE OF ROBERT BURNS, by Catherine Carswell. *New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 411 pages. $3.75.*

This is an excellent biographical study, unprejudiced, sane and beautifully written. Catherine Carswell treats her subject with honesty, and with no desire to be sensational. She has made extensive, first-hand researches into the Burns materials and has had at her command the documents of her great-great-grandfather, who was a Burns patron and landlord. She has so well assimilated this documentation as to be able to write a kind of recreation of the life and its implications. The use of the Clarinda correspondence, and the judgment on the quarrel with Mrs. Riddle, show the biographer's skill to advantage. Mrs. Carswell is able to include, moreover, a letter never printed before and a poem existing only in rare manuscript. Burns the man and Burns the poet are excellently understood.

THE OCHRANA, by A. T. Vassilyev. *Edited with an introduction by René Fülöp-Miller. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 305 pages, illustrated. $4.*

A. T. Vassilyev, who died penniless in a French hospital two years ago, was the last chief of police under the Tsar. Although he digresses frequently with bitter statements which merely reflect his monarchist prejudices, he has here contributed substantially to our knowledge of the inner workings of the Russian secret police, the "black cabinets," and the intricate spy system used as a weapon against the radicals. Vassilyev's story of his escape by way of Hungary and Germany to Paris, where he worked for a time as a porter in the Gare St. Lazare, makes exciting reading. Mr. Fülöp-Miller's introduction, cynical and individualistic in its approach, is scholarly and critical.

SCIENCE

HUMAN SPEECH, by Sir Richard Paget. *New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 360 pages. $6.*

A recent addition to the International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method. It is an exhaustive defense of the "gesture theory" of human speech. By measuring the resonance changes which occur in the production of vowels and consonants, the author concludes that we accept sounds as identical which are widely different, "*provided* they are made by similar postures or gestures of the organs of articulation." Wherefore the significant elements in human speech are "the postures and gestures, rather than the sounds. The sounds only serve to indicate the postures and gestures which produced them. We lip-read by ear." Thus, in opposition to the "bow-wow" theory of language as developing from onomatopoeia, the author holds that "human speech arose out of a generalized unconscious pantomimic gesture language—made by the limbs and features as a whole (including the tongue and lips)—which became specialized in gestures of the organs of articulation."

THE NATURE OF LIVING MATTER, by Lancelot Hogben. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 316 pages. $5.*

The title of this work, by the professor of social biology at the University of London, is somewhat misleading. Instead of a systematic treatise on biology, what we get is a series of pungent philosophic essays written from the standpoint of an experimental biologist and directed against vitalistic and speculative interpretations of biological phenomena. In the latter class Professor Hogben puts evolution, for he regards it as experimentally not demonstrated. He sees in Pavlov's objective treatment of consciousness an answer to those who, like Haldane and Smuts, ally idealism with a non-mechanical interpretation of biology. His own point of view is that all experience can be interpreted in terms of ethically neutral "public facts," a position not unlike that of Bertrand Russell. The vigor of style and the uncompromising character of Professor Hogben's ideas make the book refreshing reading, even for those who are justified in refusing to accept many of his conclusions.

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A Correction

In the article called "Noel Coward, Camille, Etc." in the issue of February 18, the sets for "Green Grow the Lilacs" were credited to Mr. Cleon Throckmorton, who built them. Credit should also be given to Mr. Raymond Lovey, who designed them.

Contributors

H. PARKER WILLIS is professor of Banking at Columbia University and editor-in-chief of The New York Journal of Commerce. He has written a number of volumes on banking and has contributed extensively to economic and other magazines.

H. BONER is a graduate of the University of Colorado. He is a contributor to Poetry: A Magazine of Verse, which awarded him the Guarantor's prize in 1929.

J. B. S. HARDMAN is editor of The Advance, official organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. He is also editor and co-author of "American Labor Dynamics."

MARIE DE L. WELCH, a California poet whose work has appeared in American and British periodicals, was formerly a co-editor of The San Francisco Review.

PAUL ROSENFELD, the author of several books of criticism and a novel, "The Boy in the Sun," is one of the editors of "The American Caravan," the fourth volume of which will be published late this month by Macaulay.

BENJAMIN GINZBURG, author of "The Adventure of Science," is now writing the biography of a famous philosopher.

JAMES RORTY, who was formerly an advertising copy writer, has written an article on recent electrical inventions which will be published in a forthcoming issue of The New Republic.

T. S. MATTHEWS is on the editorial staff of Time. His first novel, "To the Gallows I Must Go," will be published this spring by Knopf.

RAYMOND LESLIE BUELL, a frequent contributor to political and sociological journals, has been research director of the Foreign Policy Association since 1927.

KENNETH WHITE, poet and playwright, was formerly an instructor in Philosophy at Harvard. He is now free-lancing in New York City.

HORACE GREGORY'S new translation of Catullus will be published this spring by Covici-Friede.

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